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*Vindiciæ Cantus*

*Dominici:*

OR, A

VINDICATION

OF THE

DOCTRINE TAUGHT

IN A

DISCOURSE

ON THE

DIVINE ORDINANCE

OF

SINGING PSALMS.

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*Primus et medius et novissimus est David.*

*Chrysostom. Hom. 6 de penitentia.*

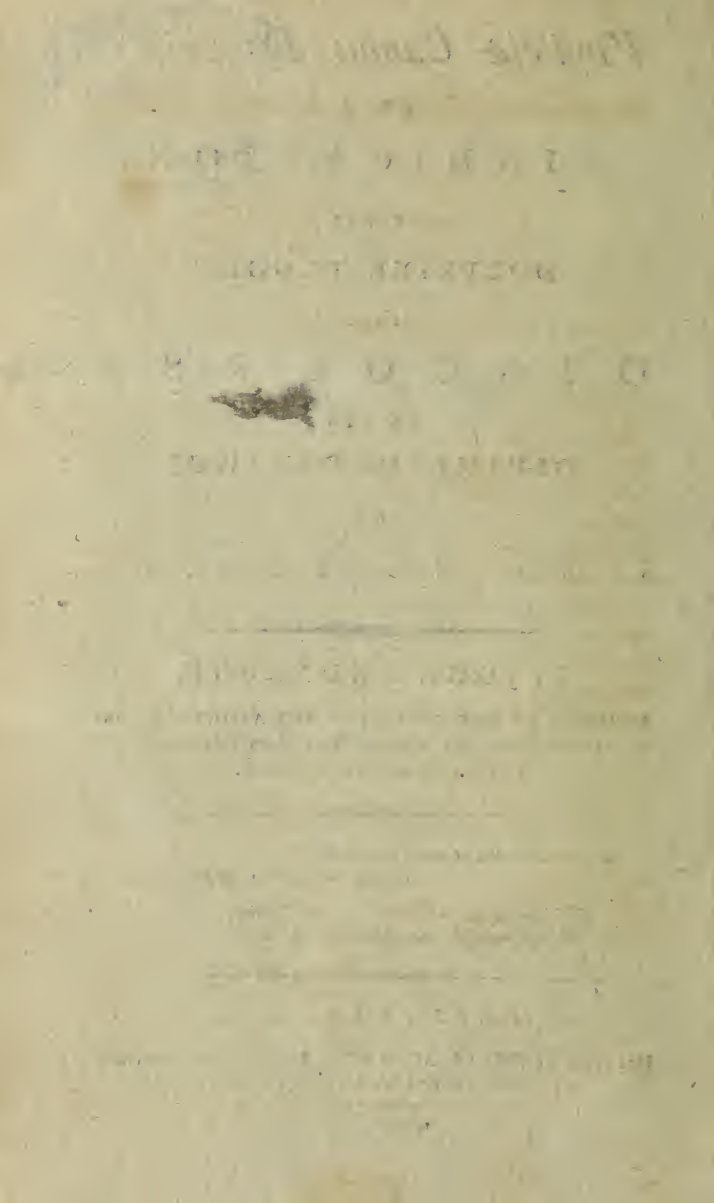
*In solemn praise, to David's ballowed strains,  
The first, and last, and middle place pertains.*

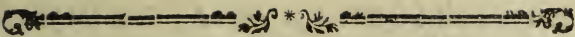
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## P R E F A C E.

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**T**HE welfare of the church and her members is deeply concerned in the preservation of the purity of God's worship; both because it is only in that which is pure or appointed in his word, that we are warranted to expect his blessing and gracious presence; and because there is nothing that more readily brings wrath upon a person or people than will-worship; as is manifest from the reason annexed to the second commandment, from the destruction of Nadab and Abihu, and from the account of God's controversy with the people of Israel. Hence we cannot be too much on our guard against the introduction of human devices into the worship of God; and therefore it behoves us to be diligent in the use of means in order to obtain a just view of the nature and tendency of the scheme, which is now so much extolled, of laying aside the book of psalms as unsuitable for New Testament worship, and of substituting in its place hymns of human composition.

It is some token for good with respect to this land, that considerable numbers in different parts of it are evidencing a care of their own souls and of the declarative glory of God, by making a stand against this corruption of his worship. To such as are engaged in this cause, nothing seems more suitable than the following pathetic exhortation

cal errors of this scheme : The *first* is with respect to the nature of singing, as if there were no difference between it and prayer, except in the manner of performance. The *second* is with respect to the doctrine taught in the Old Testament, as if it did not reveal Jesus Christ as God's way of communicating grace to men, and men's way of coming to God. The *third* is, that the psalms, in the most literal and exact translation, are not inspired or divine. So much stress being laid upon these opinions by the defenders of the new scheme of Psalmody, the reader will not wonder that each of them is here so particularly considered.

The following observations are designed for the use of those who *receive the love of the truth*. The writer is persuaded, that each section, with respect to the real purport of it, contains no other doctrine than what has been generally taught in the Protestant churches in opposition to Popery, Socinianism and Arminianism ; names, the import of which is or ought to be well known in this period of the church. He is far from pretending that there are mistakes or inadvertences in the following pages ; but a reader of candour, he has some hope, will allow, that he has endeavoured to state the subject with fairness, and to handle it, in some measure, with diligence. He has studied to avoid personal reflections, being convinced of the truth of what is observed by a late writer, " that the cause must surely be a bad one, which cannot be supported without personal reflections."

That the blessing of him *who inhabits the praises of Israel*, may accompany the perusal of the following pages, and make them profitable to his people, is, through grace, the desire of the writer.

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# *Vindiciæ Cantus Dominici.*

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## C H A P. I.

### *Of the Divine Ordinance of singing in Solemn Worship.*

**I**N essaying a vindication of the Discourse on the Divine Ordinance of singing Psalms, with some farther illustration of the subject, it is proper to follow the order of the propositions laid down in that Discourse.

THE first proposition is, *That the singing of psalms is a part of that social or public worship which God hath appointed in his word.*

IT is objected, “that in this and other places of that discourse, the subject is strangely limited to public worship\*.”

ANSWER. Every writer or speaker has a right to choose whatever part of his subject appears most suitable to the occasion or limits of his discourse: nor will he be blamed by readers or hearers of candour, provided he plainly declare what that part is. The declared design of that discourse was not to treat of the duty of singing in general, but to consider what is controverted, which was understood to be something belonging to social or public worship.

\* An examination of a Discourse on the Divine Ordinance of Singing Psalms by Mr. Black of Marsh Creek, Page 8.

NOR ought the objector to have said, that the discourse limits the subject to public worship, since it mentions singing, not only in *public* worship, but in social worship, as in families, and in solemn worship which comprehends all *immediate, stated or formal* acts of worship. God is worshipped really and materially in ejaculatory prayer, in meditation, in the study to conform our conversation in general to the rule of God's word. From this material and habitual worship acts or exercises of immediate and formal worship are distinguished in the following respects: 1. Formal acts of divine worship always imply a previous design of employing a certain portion of time in religious exercise. But material worship is just that habitual regard to God, or expressions of it prompted by particular occurrences, which should run through and sanctify our whole conversation. 2. All the acts of solemn or formal worship come under the denomination of religion, and therefore are all to be found described and expressly appointed in the word: But all the acts of material worship are not such as peculiarly belong to religion; nor is it necessary that each of them be found particularly described in the word, but only that it be not forbidden. Thus, a man's going to Jerusalem, if his journey be from right principles and to right ends, might be accounted an instance of material worship, in the same sense in which plowing or sowing is so. But the attempt of the papists to make it formal worship, was an instance of gross and stupid superstition. Thus there may be some use of hymns of human composition in material worship; because the use of them is not absolutely forbidden. But there is no warrantable use of them in the formal worship of God, unless there *be a particular description and appointment* thereof to that purpose, in his word. 3. Formal acts of worship are means of divine appointment for promoting that which is material or habitual: hence it is necessary for christians to observe this distinction, while in the present militant state: the most advanced in habitual worship have the greatest sense of their need of the means and ordinances of solemn worship. There will be no such distinction, as far as we know, in the exercise of the saints in hea-



ven: that exercise will be one continued eternal act of solemn and immediate worship\*.

SINGING in *public* worship is more frequently mentioned in the discourse, because that part of the subject seemed to be more immediately in debate; and also because *public* worship ought to be a scriptural example and pattern for that which is private: nor ought any other forms of Psalmody to be used in solemn and formal worship in *private*, than what are used in *public*.

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## C H A P. II.

*Shewing that God hath appointed the scripture forms of Psalmody to be used in the solemn worship of his church till the end of time.*

THE second proposition which was laid down in the discourse on singing psalms, is, *That there are portions of the sacred scriptures adapted to the purpose of singing; which ought to be used in the worship of the church, till the end of time.* For the explanation of this proposition four observations were offered; which have occasioned our inquiry into a variety of interesting subjects in the following sections.

SECT. I. On the question concerning what are the particular parts of scripture which ought to be sung in the solemn worship of the church.

THE first of the observations now mentioned was, that *there are portions of scripture peculiarly adapted to the purpose of singing in solemn worship.*

It is objected to what is said on this observation in the discourse, "That though the observation be true

\* The neglect or rejection of this distinction is a source of manifold pernicious errors, particularly, of that of the quakers in their contempt of the sacraments and other ordinances.

“ in itself, the discourse goes wrong in pointing out  
 “ what parts of scripture ought to be sung.”

ANSWER. The position itself being granted, all is granted which the writer intended in this part of the subject; because he apprehended that the question was not, Whether *this or that part* of scripture, should be used in the singing of solemn worship; but, Whether *some parts of scripture*, or *human compositions* were to be used?

OBJECTION. “ The writer of that discourse, has  
 “ raised a horrid outcry, about attempts to corrupt the  
 “ divine ordinance of singing psalms: but he is not ex-  
 “ plicit in declaring what the church ought to sing in  
 “ public worship: he, therefore, contributes to the cor-  
 “ ruption of that ordinance\*.”

ANSWER. It is unreasonable to expect more of any writer, than what falls within the compass of his declared designs. The discourse in question combats two corruptions: one is, The laying aside the use of literal translations of the psalms of David in the singing of public worship: the other is, The substituting of human compositions in their place. These two are distinctly pointed out; and therefore the outcry of the objector, about want of explicitness, and about contributing to the corruption of the ordinance of singing; because there may possibly be other corruptions than those insisted on in the discourse, can be only an artifice to drive us away from the state of the question. Were it once granted, that the whole book of psalms is proper to be sung in our public and solemn worship, and that nothing ought to be sung in that worship, *nisi quæ prostant in scripturis*, but the songs which are found in the inspired scriptures; we might, then, proceed to another question, namely, Whether any other parts of scripture ought to be used in our public singing? This could hardly occasion any great difference among the sincere lovers of the purity of God’s worship and ordinances.

THE writer of this discourse specified the psalms of David, because this is plainly the question under consideration, Whether it be proper for the church, under

\* An examination, &c. page 10.

the new-testament dispensation, to sing these psalms? These psalms make up the far greater part of the scripture songs. If these be discarded, we have no system of scripture psalmody remaining. Accordingly, what our opponents would substitute in the place of the psalms of David, is not only other scripture-songs, but compositions, which they suppose "Christians are abundantly "qualified to make by the rich indwelling of the word "of Christ in them."

A NUMBER of things are mentioned in the discourse with respect to the matter and form of the psalms; which, though they are not all peculiar to the psalms, undoubtedly contribute to render them adapted to the purpose of singing in solemn worship; and that as much under the new-testament dispensation as under the old.

SUPPOSING it were granted, that the whole book of psalms is proper to be sung under the new-testament dispensation, and that no other than literal translations of the scripture songs ought to be sung in public worship; the two following things would go a great way to determine what parts of sacred scripture ought to be sung.

1. THE designation of *songs* or *psalms* given by the Holy Spirit to particular portions of scripture. None of the designations of things by the Holy Spirit are without instruction; and when he says concerning a portion of his word, This is given you as a *psalm* or *song*, it is, in effect, saying, You ought to sing it; and this he is plainly saying with respect to each of the psalms. It is not hereby allowed, that, when a song is mentioned in the prophetical or allegorical parts of scripture, as in Isaiah or the revelation, we are to conclude that, in such places, we have forms of psalmody for the ordinary use of the church in her public worship; because the scope of such places rather leads us to consider them as representations of such joy and triumph as is expressed in a song, on occasion of some wonderful deliverance of the church or victory over her enemies. We may also observe here, that it is an objection against considering the words of Mary, Zechariah and Simeon as forms of psalmody, that the Holy Spirit does not expressly call them *songs*.

2. THE divinely approved example of the church and people of God. That we have this to warrant our singing the book of psalms in solemn worship is evident from the passages of scripture quoted in the discourse. We are next to consider the objections to the evidence arising from these passages.

SECT. II. Of the obligation to the use of the book of psalms in the solemn praises of the church, arising from scripture-example.

THE second observation is, *That these psalms were given to the church as forms of psalmody, and not as patterns according to which other forms were to be composed for the use of the church in her public worship.* In support of this observation, the delivery of so many of them to the chief musician is taken notice of: for it surely implies that they were to be sung in public worship: accordingly, the Levites were enjoined *to sing praises unto the Lord, with the words of David and of Asaph the Seer.* Nor is this to be considered in the same light with the circumstances of instrumental music and a band of singers; since it was ordinary and suitable to the nature of that dispensation, for the performance of a moral duty, to be attended with circumstances belonging to the ceremonial law. Besides, the singing of psalms was the duty and exercise not only of the Levites, but of the whole congregation of Israel. Hence the praises of the people are described in the same terms as those of the Levites. Psal. cxviii. 2, 3, 4. *Let Israel now say, That his mercy endureth for ever. Let the house of Aaron now say, That his mercy endureth for ever. Let them now that fear the Lord say, That his mercy endureth for ever.* Hence the whole church is called upon to join in the exercise of singing psalms, Psal. xcv. 1, 2. *O come let us sing unto the Lord;—Let us make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.* Psal. cv. 2. *Sing unto him; sing psalms unto him.* There is no reason to suppose that the people are exhorted in these and the like texts, to sing any other songs than those which were sung by the Levites.

OBJECTION. "This only proves, what no body denies, " that the Jewish church actually sung the old testament



“ songs. But this does not prove, that there was a divine appointment in the case; this example extends no further than the Jewish church; and therefore proves nothing as to what the christian church should sing\*.”

ANSWER. It is undeniable that there are cases in which a divine institution may be argued from an approved example recorded in scripture. Thus, orthodox divines conclude the divine institution of sacrifices from the acceptable offering of them by Abel; that of the christian sabbath from the examples recorded in the new-testament of the public assemblies for hearing the word, and communicating on that day; that of the form of swearing by lifting up the hand from the examples of it recorded in scripture. In like manner, we may argue the divine appointment of singing the book of psalms from the example of the church and people of God, under the old testament dispensation.

It is allowed, that there are examples of the church and people of God recorded in the old testament, which do not infer that we are under any obligation to do what they did; such as, examples of their observing the ceremonial and judicial laws; examples of an extraordinary and miraculous nature, as in prophesying or in dividing the waters of a river; examples of a merely local and transient nature, as in going up upon the house top, when a person intends to pray. But the example of singing praise, with the words of David and of Asaph, is of a different kind from any of these. It is neither an observance of any ceremonial or judicial law; nor is it of a miraculous, extraordinary or local nature: but an example of the acceptable manner of performing what cannot be denied to be a moral duty, an ordinary exercise of God's worship.

OBJECTION. “ I desire the reader to examine the whole chapter 2 Chron. xxix. and all the history of Hezekiah, and he will find that neither Hezekiah nor the princes were prophets. That they do not pretend to be actuated by inspiration in the whole busi-

“ nefs—but that they acted as any other good men  
 “ would do in similar circumstances. Having a variety  
 “ of psalms suited to the worship of God in general un-  
 “ der that dispensation, they judged certain compositions  
 “ of David and Asaph to be particularly suited to the  
 “ present occasion and ordered them to be sung accord-  
 “ ingly. As well might a minister having pointed out a  
 “ particular psalm to be sung by a worshipping assem-  
 “ bly, plead that, because he did so, God had appointed  
 “ that psalm by the whole church to the end of the  
 “ world, as reason in that manner from the command of  
 “ Hezekiah and the princes to the Levites\*.”

ANSWER. It is absurd to suppose that Hezekiah commanded any thing in the worship of God but what God himself commanded. Hezekiah's character (being *a king who did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done*) will not admit the supposition that he either practised or recommended any thing in the worship of God, merely because it appeared to him to be suitable, if he had not had the warrant of a divine command for it. The whole of the reformation, described in this chapter, is declared to have been directed by a divine command. v. 15. *The Levites came according to the commandment of the king by the words of the Lord, to cleanse the house of the Lord.* And v. 25. *He set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet : for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets.* Thus we have good reason to conclude that Hezekiah directed the Levites to sing the words of David and of Asaph, not because they seemed to him to be suitable, but because such *was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets.*

THE case supposed by the objector is quite different from that of the text under consideration. What the minister did is supposed to be done without any divine command; merely because it appeared to him to be suitable. But what Hezekiah did in reforming this as

well as other parts of the order of the temple was *according to the commandment of the Lord by his prophets*. No minister nor any other has authority to make any thing a rule to the church or the members thereof, *because he does it*. But the most high God has the highest authority to make any example of his church, or of any of his people a rule to all succeeding generations, by recording it, with his approbation of it, in the holy scriptures. Other examples may be useful, but those only recorded in the scriptures are a rule to us. Again, the minister, in the objector's supposition, fixes on a particular psalm only; whereas Hezekiah points out the system of psalms which the Levites were divinely appointed to sing.

OBJECTION. "If there was in this example recorded in 2 Chron. xxix. 30. a divine appointment directing the church in her psalmody, this absurd consequence would follow, that neither the Jews themselves, nor the christian church should ever sing any psalms, but those which were composed by David and Asaph\*."

ANSWER. This is no better a consequence than it would be to infer from Peter's exhortation to *take heed to the sure word of prophecy*, that he did not mean that we should take heed to the law of Moses or the psalms, or to the books of the new testament. We are to imitate the example now mentioned in singing the words of the *inspired* psalms; in opposition to the singing of the words of *human* compositions. The collection of the inspired psalms may be called, *the words of David and of Asaph*, because they were the penmen of the greatest part of them. There is no figure more common than that by which a part (especially when it is the far greatest part) is put for the whole.

SECT. III. Whether the nature of the ordinance of singing requires that we should consider the words we sing as our own.

In the discourse a third observation was offered, which is, *That the inspired forms of psalmody were given to the*

\* An examination, page 19.

church to be sung in her public worship till the end of the world. The strange doctrine that has been vented, in opposing this observation, renders a larger discussion of it necessary, than what was attempted in the discourse.

It had been said, that, in this part of divine worship, it is not always necessary to consider the words as our own; or even as applicable to our circumstances. This has been represented, with peculiar virulence, not only as erroneous, but as “an excuse for the crime of falsifying before God, and an attempt to change our obligations to truth and sincerity\*.” The contrary of what is asserted in the discourse must then be the opinion of the objectors, namely, “That the nature of the ordinance of singing requires the words we sing to be considered as our own; and that it is unwarrantable to sing any words that are not applicable to our present case and condition.”

THIS opinion is justly rejected, *First*, because it is an attempt to confound the duty of singing with that of prayer. On a passage in the discourse wherein the distinction between these two duties was endeavoured to be pointed out, an objector animadverts in the following manner: “What is offered in the aforesaid discourse to explain the distinction between singing and prayer, proves just the contrary of what the writer intended, namely, that there is no difference between them: for if we inwardly pray what we sing, and the matter sung be as often in the form of prayer as in any other; there is evidently no difference at all. We have the same matter, such as, confession, petition, pleading, thanksgiving, ascriptions of glory and honour both in prayer and in the scripture songs. Hence it evidently follows, that the only essential difference between them is the manner of performance.”†

ANSWER. It is observed in that discourse, that no previous form is necessary to joint prayer; but a number of people cannot join together in singing without such a form. It is also observed, that singing ought to

\* An examination, &c. page 50.

† An examination, &c. page 39. Idem, page 85.



be accompanied with inward or ejaculatory prayer. But surely this implies a difference; for if singing were prayer, it would be nonsense to talk of prayer accompanying it. Again, it is observed, that the matter sung is as often in a doctrinal, historical or hortatory form as in that of prayer: which sufficiently proves that formal prayer is not essential to singing; for a thing can never be without that which belongs to its nature: what a thing sometimes has and sometimes wants, is not *essential*, but *accidental* to that thing. Supposing that a person reads the prayers in scripture for his instruction, and a minister reads them publickly in order to discourse on them, it does not follow that either the one or the other, is, in doing so, engaged in prayer. In like manner, though persons be singing the psalms which are called prayers, they are not, therefore, formally engaged in prayer. That ejaculatory prayer is necessary to accompany the singing of them is allowed; but this no more makes singing to be prayer, than it makes reading or hearing the word, in which it is equally necessary, to be so.

OBJECTION. "We use other words than our own in preaching and prayer as well as in singing: in preaching, the words of others may be quoted: in prayer, there is a repetition of promises upon which we plead. Therefore, the words we utter in preaching and prayer may as well be considered as the words of others, as those we utter in singing; and that in all these cases there is the same reason to consider the words we utter as our own."

ANSWER. The difference between the cases, which the objector would here confound, is so obvious, that it is hard to explain it. What, will a few quotations in a discourse of a man's own composing, make the texture, composition, the choice of words, the matter or form of that discourse as little his own, as that of a hymn which had been composed by another before he was born? or, will the promises that a person pleads upon in a prayer, the whole tenor of which was suggested by the views and affections he had in the time of uttering it, make the words of that prayer as little the

person's own words, as those of a hymn in the composing of which he cannot pretend to have had the least share? It is evident, that, in the exercise of prayer, our thoughts and affections suggest the words; but, in singing, it is just the reverse; for the words, rightly understood, suggest suitable thoughts; and suitable or spiritual thoughts kindle spiritual and devout affections.

WE observe, in the *second* place, that the supposition of our opponents is contrary to the common sense of mankind: for who ever imagined that, in any ordinary case, a person is chargeable with lying, because the verses he sings are not descriptive of, or applicable to, his own case? Surely it would be absurd to charge a person that had sung the *Il penseroso* of Milton with a lie; because he had never heard a nightingale, and therefore sung what was not at all applicable to himself, in the following beautiful lines:

Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,  
Most musical, most melancholy!  
Thee, chauntress, oft, the woods among,  
I woo, to hear thy even-song.

IN the *third* place, nothing can be more absurd than to suppose, that all the words of any form of psalmody, can be sung by every individual of a worshipping assembly as his own words, and as suited to his own case or condition. Let any one, for example, consider how every person of a congregation is to sing the following words of Dr. Watts as his own words:

By long experience have I known  
Thy sovereign power to save:  
At thy command I venture down  
Securely to the grave.

Psalm lxxi.

FARTHER, the charge of insincerity, brought against us by our opponents, may be justly retorted: for how does it consist with sincerity to consider the words which we sing, as our own words, while we are conscious to our-

selves that they are not at all our words? Upon this principle, it seems inconceivable, how a person, ordinarily joining with any congregation or family in this part of social worship, can escape the charge of hypocrisy and dissimulation: for he must be sensible that, in the words sung, frames and exercises are frequently represented very different from his own. Perhaps, the objector means to excuse this inconsistency, when he insinuates that the existence of the facts themselves *any where*, will warrant a person to sing the psalms that describe them, though these facts do not exist with himself or in his experience\*. But is he to be thus excused who sings words as his own, in which certain experiences and attainments, to which he is an entire stranger, are represented? may he safely say and sing, that he himself has the same experience and attainments which any of his contemporaries have? If a person had said falsely, that he was an eye-witness of a particular fact, whether would it be a better excuse, that it existed at the time he represented, but at a place an hundred miles off, or that it existed in the place he described, about the space of an hundred years before?

THIS supposition of its being essential to singing in solemn worship that we should consider the words sung as our own, and as descriptive of our own case and circumstances, though so exceedingly absurd, is the great reason why our opponents refuse to sing such expressions in the book of psalms as the following: *Blow up the trumpet in the new moon: in the time appointed on our solemn feast day. Blessed is the man in whose heart are the ways of them who, passing through the valley of Baca make it a well: the rain also filleth the pools. Bind the sacrifices with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.* Why are such passages improper to be sung in new testament worship? It is not, it seems, because they are obscure, or afford little instruction: but because church-members cannot now sing them as their own words, or as, in their literal sense, relative to their own present case and condition: there can be no singing with truth or sincer-

\* An examination, &c. pages 54, 55.

nity according to this opinion, on account of the endless variety of the frames and conditions of church-members, unless every one were allowed to have his own psalm or hymn ; and then there would be no joint or social singing at all.

UPON this absurd supposition it is, that our opponents allege as a reason for declining to sing some of the passages above recited, That they represent some facts as presently existing, which we must now regard as past events. Were it not for the strange prejudice we have been considering, there would be no difficulty here at all. Remembering that the words we sing are not ours, but those of the psalmist, or of the church in his time (which one should think very easy and natural) we would consider the manner of speaking of past things in the present tense as the most lively and engaging way of representing the exercise or the condition of the church and people of God in former times, for our learning ; that we, through patience and comfort of the scripture, might have hope. Thus, through the Lord's blessing and the effectual working of his spirit, we might get much food to our souls out of such passages.

THIS matter is represented with great propriety in the xiii. direction of Mr. Marshal's Gospel-Mystery of Sanctification. "We are", says he, "to sing such psalms as speak in the first person, though we cannot apply them to ourselves as words uttered by ourselves concerning ourselves: and in this we do not lie. David speaks of Christ as of himself, as a pattern of affliction and virtue, to instruct others ; and we sing such psalms, not as our words, but words for our instruction. And therein we do not lie any more than the Levites, the sons of Korah, or Jeduthun, or other musicians bound to sing them. Though it be good to perorate all the good that we can ; yet we have so much liberty in the use of psalms, that though we cannot apply all to ourselves, as speaking and thinking the same ; yet we shall answer the end, if we sing for our instruction."



SECT. IV. Of the knowledge which the old testament church had of Christ.

IT is observed in the discourse on singing psalms, That the prophets under the old testament declared the name of Christ; and that the faith of the saints under that dispensation corresponded with the testimony of the prophets; and that their acceptable drawing near to God, was by Christ's name alone. Very opposite, indeed, is the doctrine taught in the following quotation: "The mercy of God was revealed from the beginning. "Salvation by grace—salvation as a free gift—an undeserved favour, was the hope of the saints of old. "The faithfulness of a promising God was the foundation of their hope and trust; and it is the ultimate "object of faith as well since, as before the coming of "Christ. In this the faith of the saints agrees, and is "one and the same in all ages. The knowledge of "God in a dispensation of grace, and a sense of guilt "and need of mercy, appear to be absolutely necessary "in a sinner, in order to his returning unto God. But "the *medium* through which that mercy and grace is "communicated; and how the communication thereof "is consistent with the divine attributes and government appear to be the discovery of the new-testament. "With regard to the design and use of types, it is evident they were not intended to reveal their antitypes. "Without literal information, they could never convey "the least idea of the future things typified. The "principal end, therefore, of the prophecies, and the "whole design and use of types, is for the benefit of "those who should come after, and not of those who "live before the accomplishment of the prophecies, or "whilst the types exist: that is to say, for the benefit "of those among whom the great antitype was to "make his appearance, and of those who were to compose his church to the end of time\*."

WHAT is denied in this quotation, and what we hold as the undoubted truth of God, is, that there was

\* An examination, &c. pages 82, 93.

such a revelation made of Christ in the promises, prophecies and types of the old testament, as brought church-members to a *real* and *certain* knowledge of his person, of his obedience and sufferings, as the only channel through which grace and mercy have a blessed egress in the communication of all spiritual and saving blessings ; and that this knowledge always belonged to the nature and exercise of true and saving faith. The truth on this head is evinced by such considerations as the following.

1. THERE was a revelation of Christ in the first gospel-promise : God said to the serpent, *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed. He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* In these words we may observe. 1st. The great benefit promised, namely, the putting of enmity between the serpent and the woman, between the serpent's seed and her seed. Now the putting of this enmity between the woman with her seed and the serpent with his seed, signified the removal of the breach which the devil had occasioned to the woman and her seed with God, by justification ; and the subduing of the power and dominion of sin by sanctification. It is plain, that enmity with the serpent signified peace and reconciliation with God. 2. The victory and triumph of Christ, and of his people was signified by the bruising of the serpent's head. 3. The way in which these benefits were to be procured is pointed out in the prediction, that the seed of the woman was to have his heel bruised by the serpent ; for *it behoved Christ to suffer.* 4. The union of the two natures in the person of Christ is here revealed : for the seed of the woman could not bruise the serpent's head, unless he were God ; and he could not be bruised, unless he were man. 5. Here, too, we have the ground of his people's participation of the benefit of his sufferings, namely, their union with him as their covenant head and representative, or their inbeing in him. Hence he and they bear the same name : both are called the seed of the woman. 6. The mean is also intimated, of their actual union and fellowship with him, namely, faith or believing : this being the only way of receiving what is

here held forth to them in a free and unconditional promise ; as the only way of apprehending light is by the eye ; and that of apprehending sounds is by the ear.

BUT it will be said, Did our first parents understand all this to be included in these words? We answer, There is no reason to doubt but that they understood the benefit promised, to be reconciliation to an offended God, and deliverance from the guilt and power of sin ; for nothing else was suitable to what they felt to be their case. Nor can we doubt, that they understood a glorious redeemer, a divine person to be here revealed, who was well able to bruise the serpent's head, and to bring about their reconciliation to God. And if they put any meaning at all on the divine person's designation as the seed of the woman, and on the bruising of his heel, they must have understood, that he was to have a human nature, in which he was to suffer. That these words were spoken to the serpent for the sake of our first parents, for their consolation, is certain : and it is as little to be doubted that, in order to answer this end, they must have apprehended the true meaning of them.

THIS promise is a key to all that follows in the old testament. This promise is presupposed in all the gracious relations which were afterwards made to the church. Was a promise of any blessing given? it was to be fulfilled in or for the sake of the seed of the woman. Had church-members any hope or confidence, that God would accept their persons and services? it was wholly founded upon the revelation of the seed of the woman. Was any ceremonial institution observed? it was ever considered as referring to the seed of the woman ; to the bruising of his heel, or to his bruising the serpent's head, or to the benefits resulting therefrom. Were they called to put away the evil of their doings, or to perform any duty? they were to set about it no otherwise than by a believing application of this promise. For we cannot suppose that church-members, in after periods, unless when they were chargeable with an utter neglect of the appointed means, and had fallen into grievous error and corruption, would have *less* (but

rather *more*) knowledge of this blessed and blessing seed, than our first parents had.

2. WE may argue from those places of scripture which represent Christ as the only way of salvation that ever was revealed to, or apprehended by faith. To this purpose is Acts iv. 12. *Neither is there salvation in any other : for there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved,* It is here laid down as a truth of absolute universality ; a truth under the old testament as well as under the new, *That there is no salvation in any other.* According to this text, if the fathers knew not Christ, neither did they know that salvation that never was nor could be truly known any otherwise than as in him, as included in his name, as wrought out by him. To the same purpose are Christ's own words in John xiv. 6. *I am the way, the truth, and the life : no man cometh to the father but by me.* This is a proposition of the same universal extent. Coming to God by Christ cannot mean less than that persons know and believe that Christ is the way ; for how can a person be said to come to God by Christ as the way, if he be altogether ignorant of Christ ? nor can any one be said to know Christ to be the way, unless he know him to be the only true and proper propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of men ; a sacrifice which is a *savour of rest* indeed. Thus Christ Jesus is *the same*, not only in himself, but as the object of the church's faith, *to day, yesterday and for ever.* Heb. xiii. 8.

3. THAT church-members under the old testament, were acquainted with the justice and satisfying righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the ground of their pardon and acceptance with God, is evident from the account which the scripture gives of their justification, particularly, in the examples of Abraham and David. In Gen. xv. 6. It is said, that *Abraham believed God*, as promising the blessed and blessing seed, and *it was imputed to him for righteousness.* It is the scope of the apostle in the ivth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, to represent Abraham's justification as the exact pattern of ours. So that if we are justified before God by the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us and apprehended



by faith; so was Abraham. Now, says the apostle, *it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him: but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.* But, as Dr. Guise on the place justly asks, how can this be the same sort of faith with Abraham's, unless his also had a respect to Christ and to what should be done by him according to the notices he then had of these things? The apostle, in the same chapter, shews that David, in the 1st and 2d verses of xxxii. Psalm, *describeth the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works: and what is that righteousness which is imputed to believers for their justification, and which admits none of their works or inherent righteousness to share with it in that matter? Why, it is manifestly the same which is described in the third chapter of this epistle, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; that righteousness of which our Immanuel said, when he was dying, IT IS FINISHED.* To these examples we may add the declaration of the apostle Peter in Acts x. 43. *To him give all the prophets witness, that whosoever believeth on him, should receive remission of sins.* In these words it is represented as the uniform doctrine of the prophets, that remission of sins or justification is received in the way of believing in Christ or in his name. And if we would know what is his name through which we are to receive remission of sins; one of the prophets answers, *This is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

4. WE may argue from the consideration which church-members must have had of the sacrifices under the law. It is often expressly declared, that these are to make atonement for the sins of the offerer. One thing was undeniably taught the Israelites by the appointment of sacrifices, namely, That *some* atonement or satisfaction was necessary in order to the forgiveness of sin. Heb. ix. 22. *Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.* This being supposed, the offerer of a sacrifice

under the law, must have considered that sacrifice, either as a real and sufficient atonement for his sin, or as a sign and figure of that which is so. But no church-member that had any right apprehensions of God or of the evil of sin, or that attended to the word of God, or compared one part of it with another, could be supposed to entertain so absurd a thought as this, that such sacrifices were a real and proper atonement for their souls: *for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin.* Besides, many things, such as, the Lord's declaring that he did not desire sacrifice, the frequent repetition of the same offerings, the experience they had of their utter unprofitableness for purging the conscience, served sufficiently to intimate, that they were not the real atonement, but a sign or figure appointed to direct their meditation and their faith to the real atonement. Nor could they err in their enquiry after that atonement, if they duly remembered the divine person revealed in the first promise, who was to have his heel bruised, that he might bruise the head of the serpent. As to true believers among them, the Lord the Spirit, removing, in some measure, the veil that was upon their hearts, enabled them *to look to the end of that which was to be abolished*; enabled them to carry their views along the continuation of the legal sacrifices to the ending of them in the true atonement, to that offering and sacrifice, which is, to the justice of God and to the conscience of the sinner, *a saviour of flesh.* By the sacrifices of the old testament, as well as by the sacraments, Christ was not only represented, but sealed and applied to believers.

5. WE may argue from the frequent accounts in the old testaments of *the angel of the covenant*, who could never, with the least colour of reason, be understood of any other than that divine person, the son of God, who was to bruise the head of the serpent by means of his own sufferings, or who, *through death*, was to *destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.* This was the angel of Jehovah who wrestled with Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 24, 30. who called unto Abraham out of heaven, Gen. xxii. 15. who spake to Moses out of the bush,

Exod. iii. 2, 6. Deut. xxxii. 16. who conducted the Israelites into the land of Canaan, Exod, xxiii. 20, 21. who is called the angel of the divine face or presence, Isai. lxiii. 9. and the captain of the Lord's host, Joshua v. 13, 14, 15. In these passages such things are ascribed to this angel, as it would be blasphemy to ascribe to any one who is not himself the most high God. The modern Jews having apostatised from the religion of their ancestors in denying the doctrine of the Trinity, and the divinity of the Messiah, are as much puzzled with the passages now referred to, as the Socinians are, with any declarations of Christ's divinity in the new testament. See the xiv chapter of Buxtorf's history of the ark of the covenant. One Rabbi owns, *that he is constituted guardian and preserver of the world and of Israel ; and that all things are subject to him.* Another, *that his name is as the name of God ; and that all intelligible and spiritual beings are dependent on him.* "How, or in what manner," says Buxtorf, "all these things agree to any created angel, it behoves the Jews to determine : but from these concessions, solid arguments may be drawn for proving against the Jews themselves the divinity of this angel, and his equality with him that sent him." The evidences of Christ's divinity are so clear, it seems, in the old testament, that it is too hard for the bitterest enemies of this truth to evade them. Surely then it could not be unknown to those under that dispensation who received the love of the truth : and knowing the person of Christ, they could not fail to understand, in some real measure, what is predicted concerning his sufferings and his glory ; they could not but know him as the medium of all the gracious communications of God to sinners of mankind.

HERE we may take notice of that illustrious passage in the xix. chapter of the book of Job. *I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself ; and mine eyes shall behold, and not another : though my reins be consumed within me.* The words of

this passage are such as cannot well be understood of a temporal deliverance : and Job intimates the peculiar importance of them in this introduction ; *Oh that my words were now written ! Oh that they were printed in a book ! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever !* The words cannot be understood of Job's restoration to a prosperous worldly condition : for of that Job had, at this time, no prospect. Job vi. 8, 9, 11. vii. 7, 8. x. 20, 21. xvi. 22. xvii. 1. 15. and even in this chapter, verse 10. he says, *God hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone : and mine hope hath he removed like a tree.* But Job speaks of the redemption described in the words now under consideration, as a matter of the greatest certainty : his expression *I know*, is parallel to the *we know and are sure* of the apostles, 2 Corinth. v. 1. John vi. 69. he speaks of it as a redemption that was sure to be consummated at the last day after his body had been a prey of worms and mingled with other dust ; consummated by the seeing of God in his flesh, by the beholding of his redeemer : this it was evidently, not a temporal, but a spiritual and eternal redemption ; it was particularly, the consummation of it in the glorious resurrection of the body, that he meant. The living redeemer whom he knew was, therefore, not a redeemer from temporal adversity, but a redeemer from the guilt, and power of sin ; even the same who had been promised under the name of the seed of the woman ; our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall stand at the latter day upon the earth as a triumphant conqueror, having put all his and his people's enemies under his feet. Nor is the emphasis of the word *Goel* to be here overlooked : It signifies a kinsman redeemer. The *Goel* under the law was one who was to act a generous part towards his poor kinsman ; particularly, to redeem his inheritance, if it was mortgaged or sold, by paying a price ; to avenge his death, if he was slain, and to marry his widow. And, who but our Lord Jesus Christ, is the redeemer whom Job knew ; and that would come up to the full import of this name ; that would, by paying a price, redeem the inheritance of eternal life, that Job, as well as other chil-



dren of fallen Adam, had forfeited, that would avenge him of his infernal adversary by bruising his head ; and that would betroth him to himself for ever.

6. WE might reason from an induction of the particular predictions concerning the person, the humiliation and exaltation of Christ ; predictions which no art can accommodate to any other person or events ; such as, Deut. xviii. 15. Psal. cx. Ifai. ix. 6. lñi. Jerem. xxiii. 5, 6. Dan. ix. 24. Mic. v. 2. Zech. vi. 12, 13. That these prophecies were intended to be certainly understood of Christ by those to whom they were first delivered, (though not so fully as they may be understood by church-members now under the new testament,) cannot reasonably be denied ; if it be considered that each part of the scriptures of the old testament was delivered to church members for the purpose of affording them that reproof, correction, instruction or consolation which their case at that time required : and it is evident that such parts of the word could not answer that purpose, but in so far as they were understood. Hence it is so necessary to the right understanding of particular parts of the divine word, to attend to the occasions on which they were first delivered. For example, in the prophecy which we have in Ifai. vii. 14. *Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel* ; the birth of Christ was given as a sign to confirm and encourage the faith of the Lord's people as to the deliverance of Judah from the present designs of their combined enemies. But it is manifest, that it could not answer that end to those who did not truly understand *the birth of Christ* to be meant in these words.

7. THE believing regard of the old testament-saints to Christ, is often taken notice of in the new testament. Thus in John viii. 55. Christ says to the Jews, *Abraham rejoiced to see my day : and he saw it, and was glad.* The day of Christ which Abraham saw was the day of his appearing to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself : nor does it seem to have been peculiar to Abraham, but was rather common to him with all that walk-

ed in the steps of his faith\*. Whatever knowledge Abraham attained by extraordinary visions or otherwise, he, no doubt, imparted it to his family and to other believers. Again, in Heb. xi. 26. Moses is said to have *esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt*. The apostle here evidently teaches that it was the knowledge of Christ, of his person and grace, that made Moses esteem the reproach he met with, as the reproach of Christ, as suffering with Christ and for his sake, and therefore more desirable than all the treasures of Egypt. Another text serving to shew, that the saints under the old testament as well as under the new, understood that the grace by which they were saved, was the grace of Christ, is in Acts xv. 11. *We believe that, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they*, *μαθ' ὡς ἑστέον καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι*. Here according to the most natural construction of the words, it is expressly asserted, that the fathers of the old testament believed in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ for their salvation, in the same manner as the new testament saints believe in it. As to the Socinian exception, that the pronoun *they* may refer to the Gentiles, mentioned in the 7th verse, it is evident that it is quite groundless, and that the pronoun can have no other antecedent than the fathers, on account of the antithesis or opposition which the apostle states in the 10th and 11th verses, denying in the one that we are saved by the law; that being *a yoke which*, says he, *neither we nor our fathers were able to bear*; and affirming, in the other, that both we and our fathers have the same faith of salvation by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

8. WE may argue from this, that Christ and his apostles constantly referred their hearers to the old testament scriptures, as containing the same doctrine which they taught. Thus Christ says to the Jews concerning the old testament scriptures in John v. 39. *They are they which testify of me*. And what do they testify?

\* The only way of seeing Christ which ever was beneficial to the soul, was by faith, John vi. 40 it was the opposite of Balaam's way of seeing him: Numb. xxiv. 17. Consequently believers saw him as *near* and as present to their faith.

Why, just what I testify of myself, that I should *give myself a ransom for many*; that I should *lay down my life for the sheep*. He farther intimates, that no new revelation was necessary to their discovery of these things concerning Christ in the old testament scriptures: nothing more, in the way of outward means, was necessary, than *searching the scriptures* with a diligence becoming those who professed that they had *eternal life* in them. To the same purpose is our Lord's affecting expostulation with the disciples in Luke xxiv. 25, 26. *O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?* From this sharp expostulation it is a necessary consequence, that it was revealed in the words of the prophets, that Christ ought to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory; and revealed so plainly as to render the ignorance thereof, in the disciples and others who read or heard these words, utterly inexcusable. So our Lord reproved the Sadducees for their inattention to the evidence of the resurrection in the words which Moses heard out of the bush; for nothing less can be meant in our Lord's saying, that Moses shewed that doctrine in the words he heard out of the bush, and in his declaring, that their error rose from inexcusable ignorance of the scriptures as well as of the power of God. Remarkable to the same purpose is that which Paul declared before king Agrippa, Acts xxvi. 22, 23. *Having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead.* Here two things are evident: 1<sup>st</sup>. That the doctrines which the apostle taught were no other than what are to be found in the scriptures of the old testament: and particularly, that what he taught concerning the sufferings and resurrection of Christ as actually accomplished, was no other than what had been taught by the prophets concerning them as things to come. 2<sup>dly</sup>. That they were taught in the old testament so plainly, that neither Agrippa nor any other attentive reader of it, could deny them to be

there : for this is the import of the apostle's appeal to Agrippa.

9. WE cannot admit this opinion, that the old testament predictions of the person, the sufferings and glory of Christ were not understood by church-members under that dispensation, on account of the consequences with which it is attended. Such as, that a great advantage is hereby given to the Jews in our controversy with them, when we allow, that Christ and his apostles put such a meaning upon certain passages of the old testament scriptures as answered their purpose ; and as nobody before them either had or could have understood to be the meaning of them. According to this opinion, the faith which views the promises as the promises of an absolute God, of God out of Christ, of God exercising mercy without requiring any satisfaction to his law, or suitable demonstration of his justice, holiness and hatred of sin, may be saving faith ; and the Socinian scheme may be right in supposing no other faith to be necessary : for if men were justified and saved by such a faith under the old testament, why may they not be so now under the new ? it is of no avail to say, that the new testament revelation requires a new sort of faith ; for the question is about what sort of faith the sinful and miserable state of man requires. And if men might be justified and saved by a faith in God absolutely considered, there was no necessity either for the new testament revelation, or for the new faith which it is supposed to require. Farther, according to this scheme, we cannot understand how there could be any more obscurity in the old testament revelation than in the new : for, according to it, the old testament saints had as clear a revelation of all that their faith respected, as the new testament saints have of what their faith respects. The doctrine about the obscurity of the old testament dispensation, that has been usually taught in the reformed churches, proceeds upon the supposition, that saving faith under the old and new testament is the same ; that it is of the same nature ; that it had the same object ; that it always had the same real respect to the obedience and death of Christ ; which, in the old testament, were



represented as things to come, but, in the new, as things already accomplished; and therefore more obscurely represented in the former than in the latter. We may add, what was observed in the discourse on singing psalms, that the supposition, that sinful men could come unto God under any dispensation without the knowledge of Christ's name, leads into the opinion of salvation being attainable by the heathens, without ever hearing of his name or of salvation by his blood; an opinion which manifestly tends to the total subversion of the christian religion. Upon the whole, we conclude, that there was *a real* revelation of the same redeemer, of the same justifying righteousness, of the same plan of salvation to the church and people of God under the old testament, that there is under the new.

BEFORE we enter upon the consideration of objections, it may be of use to offer some view of the differences between the old and the new testament dispensations.

IN general, the difference is wholly in *the manner* of exhibiting Christ and of administering the covenant of grace. That which was exhibited or administered was one and the same. In that manner the following things are to be carefully attended to.

1. UNDER the old testament, the condition of the promise, or covenant of grace, was set forth *as yet to be fulfilled* in the obedience and death of Christ: and in the new, it is set forth *as already fulfilled*.

2. UNDER the old testament, the covenant of grace, or Christ, in whom it always stood fast was exhibited in the word: but church-members, being as yet in the state of children, and backward to the right understanding and application of the things contained in the word, the Lord was pleased to lead them by the hand to the understanding and application of these things, in a manner adapted to their childish condition, by the institution of *types* and *figures*. These types were no otherwise veils to the spiritual things represented by them than a child's spelling and dividing the words into syllables is a veil to the sense of what he reads; which truly leads to that sense, though in a way adapted to

the capacity of a child. Under the new testament, the same things that had been set forth in the word, are set forth in it still, but *more clearly and fully*. Instituted signs are made use of only in the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper. The church has now *no more occasion* for the way of learning suited to a state of childhood by *types and figures*; as one that has learned to read, has no more occasion, in order to come at the sense of what he reads, to spell and divide the words into syllables.

3. THE Lord's way of instructing his people in spiritual and evangelical things, by shadows of them in outward and temporal things and by the practice of the ceremonial law, made *the outward appearance* of the old testament dispensation *less spiritual and evangelical* than that of the new.

4. THOUGH it is the duty of church members under the new testament as well as it was so under the old to make such a profession as the people of Israel made at Sinai of renouncing the covenant of works, and of taking the Lord for their God according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, and of being his willing people by virtue of that everlasting covenant, *in the way of publicly and jointly entering into a covenant of duty and gratitude*; yet there was much in *the matter* of the national covenant of the Israelites that was peculiar to the old testament dispensation; particularly, their adherence, in that covenant, to the practice of the ceremonial and judicial laws; and their acknowledgment of the connection between their adherence to these laws and their comfortable possession of the land of Canaan. Hence *two* circumstances followed: *one* was, that there were extraordinary and peculiar dispensations of providence as to the temporal condition of their nation as such, subservient to the observation of their covenant engagements in profession and practice, which have no parallel in the case of any particular nation as such under the new testament\*. The *other* was, the restriction of the

\* Such as, that, through the bounty of providence, they suffered no disadvantage from their lands lying untilld every seventh year.

visible church, till the death of Christ, to the land of Canaan and to the people of Israel ; whereas, under the new testament, the church is gathered out of all nations on the face of the earth.

5. THE more plentiful out-pouring of the holy spirit, which imports the more distinct manifestation as well as the more abundant partaking of his operations both special and common, is a principal advantage of the new testament dispensation above the old. Here it is to be observed, that we do not speak of the extraordinary attainments of some of the most eminent saints under the old testament ; but of what was the ordinary allowance of church-members.

BUT the knowledge of Christ, of his righteousness and salvation which we have ascribed to old testament believers is perfectly consistent with all these differences :—*with the first*, for Christ and his fulfilment of the condition of the everlasting covenant might be known in the word as yet to come, no less truly than as already come :—*with the second*, for the knowledge of Christ, as the true propitiatory sacrifice for sin, and as the Lord our righteousness might be attained by a way of learning more adapted to the capacity of children as really, though not so clearly or fully, as by a way of learning more adapted to a state of manhood :—*with the third*, for, amidst all those legal and carnal appearances in the Lord's way of instructing his church under the old testament, what was *really* taught might have been seen, and, by true believers, actually was seen to be, at bottom, the same spiritual and evangelical things that are now taught under the new testament :—*with the fourth*, for, setting aside the peculiarity of the *matter* of their engagement with respect to the ceremonial and judicial laws, their engagement itself was an adherence to the covenant of grace, to the Lord as their God in Christ, which was of the same nature with the professed adherence of believers to the covenant of grace under the new testament : *with the fifth*, because the same spirit of Christ which is now in the church, was in it then, carrying on the same blessed work : the difference is only in the measure, not in the nature of his influences and

operations : and also in this circumstance, that what the spirit revealed in believers under the old testament was Christ *as not yet come* ; whereas what he reveals in them under the new is Christ *as already come*.

OBJECTION. " The gospel in general is called a *mystery hidden* till the age of the apostles in 1 Corinth. ii. 7, 8, 9. The prophet Isaiah, whose words the apostle quotes, although he had given the clearest predictions concerning the Messiah, of any of the prophets, declares, that these did not give a clear view of the gospel ; as if he had said, from all that hath been revealed as yet, just conceptions of that sublime plan and of the method by which it is to be accomplished, cannot be obtained. But, says the apostle, the spirit of God who alone penetrates and knows the deep things of God, the profound mysteries of his counsels and his gospel, hath revealed them unto his apostles. Perfectly to the same purpose is his declaration to the Romans (xvi. 25.) The revelation of the mystery which was kept secret, since the world began, but is now made manifest, &c\*."

ANSWER. If the objector means that the expressions *hidden or kept secret* should be understood absolutely, he agrees with the Socinians, who deny, that any promise of eternal life was plainly made to the people of God under the old testament. *Bonum æternæ vitæ*, says Smalcus, *nusquam in vetere Fœdere populo aperte promissum fuit*. For surely eternal life is one of these things prepared for them that love God, or rather the sum of them. From Rom. xvi. 25, 26. the Socinians draw this inference, *Ergo Evangelium temporibus Veteris Testamenti latuit, et nulla ratione revelatum fuit* ; that is, therefore the gospel was hid in the times of the old testament, and was not at all revealed†. Thus if the expressions *hid or kept secret*, in these passages, be taken absolutely and without restriction, they will prove all that the Socinians maintain : and will contradict what the

\* An examination, &c. page 95.

† See Hornbeke's Socinianismi Confut. Compend. Libri 2di. Cap. 1mo.



objector himself allows, namely, that the old testament church had promises of salvation by grace, that is, of everlasting salvation. So that the absolute sense of these expressions is as inconsistent with what he himself grants, as it is with what we maintain. But the mystery *being kept secret since the world began* signifies, that many ages passed before the predictions concerning the death of Christ and the calling of the Gentiles were fulfilled; before the mystery of Christ was revealed in that clear and distinct manner which characterises the new testament dispensation; and before it was revealed to the Gentiles at all: the last of these particulars seems to be chiefly intended in Rom. xvi. 25. as agreeing best with these words: *by the scriptures of the prophets made known to all nations for the obedience of faith*: for the gospel was certainly made known to Israel before *by the scriptures of the prophets*; and also for the very end specified by the apostle, namely, *for the obedience of faith*.

We may further observe that the scope of the apostle in 1 Cor. ii. is to represent the wisdom of God in the gospel as opposite to the wisdom of this world, and what neither is nor can be known by natural men, not even by *the princes of the world*, or those who are supposed to possess the greatest share of worldly wisdom: such, for example, as Herod, Pontius Pilate, the chief priests and scribes, who *crucified the Lord of glory*. From the scope of this chapter it is also evident, that the revelation of these things spoken of in v. 10. is to be understood not only, as the objector seems to insinuate, of what was peculiar to Paul as an apostle, but also, and chiefly, of what was common to him with all other true believers: for there is an heavenly revelation by the spirit of grace, an internal and supernatural illumination of the mind, which is necessary to the production of saving faith; whereby *we know the things that are freely given us of God*. This doth not distinguish the old testament dispensation from the new; but regenerate from unregenerate men under every dispensation. The apostle says in the name of all true believers, *God hath revealed them to us by his spirit*.



As to the passage quoted from Isaiah, it cannot be inferred from it, that either the spiritual blessings of the covenant of grace or the sacrifice of Christ as the channel of their communication, was altogether unknown under the old testament; but only, that the greatness and excellency of both these are what natural men cannot have any just conceptions of; and that believers who are the only persons that truly know them, are the most ready to acknowledge the narrowness and unsuitableness of their apprehensions of them, 1 John iii. 1, 2. Psal. xxxi. 19.

OBJECTION. "The extraordinary dispensation of the spirit mentioned, John xvi. 12, 13, 14. that these things had not been revealed before, namely, all the truth, and the things of Christ. Paul, in unfolding the typical meaning of the old testament institutions, Heb. ix. expressly asserts this truth in the 8th verse. For after giving a relation of the tabernacle furniture, priesthood, offerings, &c. he says, *The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.* As if he had said, By the very frame of the Jewish ritual of worship and ordinances, the Holy Spirit, in fact, intimated, that the grand scheme was not yet discovered, and that it was not to be known whilst that œconomy continued\*."

ANSWER. The expression, *not yet made manifest*, does not mean that the way into the holiest was not, as yet, known at all; for it was undoubtedly made known before by the declarations of the word and by types; but, while the first tabernacle was standing, it was not yet placed εν τω φανερω in such an illustrious light as that in which it was placed, when the veil of the temple was rent, when the price of our redemption was actually paid, when Christ was justified in the spirit, preached unto the Gentiles, received up into glory. The taking place of these things made it manifest, that the tabernacle and the Levitical service were at an end: for these

\* An examination, &c. page 96, 97.

things could not take place, while the first tabernacle was standing : such is the scope of the apostle's discourse here.

As to the passage in John xvi. 12, 13, 14. it points out the end for which the spirit is given to believers both under the old testament and under the new : for that he was given to believers under the old testament, is undeniable, Numb. xiv. 25. Haggai ii. 5. Psal. li. 11, 12, and cxliii. 10. Now, it was always the work and office of the spirit towards his church and people, to guide them into all the articles of truth revealed in his word, to teach them the things of Christ, the things which Christ had spoken unto them. We allow that our Lord's words have respect to the more plentiful effusion of the spirit under the new testament, and to his giving believers more clear and distinct views of Christ's obedience unto death, as the only way of their access to and acceptance with God : but this will not prove, what the objector means to prove, that, under the old testament, they had no certain or determinate views of his obedience unto death at all.

SECT. V. Of the instruction of the church under the old testament by types.

WHILE men affect to make a type of every thing they meet with in the history of the old testament, in which there appears to be any analogy or resemblance to spiritual things, they are in danger of turning the sacred history into an allegory or fable, of utterly losing sight of the true and determinate sense of scripture, of neglecting the solid knowledge and the power of godliness. Hence judicious divines agree in cautioning against the itch of multiplying types.

YET that there were, under the old testament, persons and things appointed of God to be types, figures or shadows of *him that was to come*, is undeniable ; and therefore it behoves us diligently to inquire concerning them.

We may observe in the first place, that the types were shadows or signs of Christ, or of what is in Christ. Col. ii. 17. *These are a shadow of things to come ; but the body is of Christ.*

IN the second place, they were shadows of Christ as to come. Thus in Heb. x. 1. the ceremonial law is described as *having a shadow of good things to come*; such as, Christ's appearing as our great high priest, his making atonement for sin by his own blood, and his entering by his own blood into the holy place not made with hands; there to appear in the presence of God for us. Spiritual worship and the saving influences of the Holy Spirit, which were to be found, in the reality thereof, with all true believers in all ages, were not properly typified or prefigured, though they might be signified by some of the ceremonial rites. These are inseparable from their meritorious cause, the sacrifice of Christ, which was the great object represented by what, properly speaking, were types; and therefore signs of them necessarily accompanied the types. The principal figure might be a type, while many circumstances attending it were only signs.

HENCE we see the absurdity of the notion that the signification of the ceremonial institutions was wholly unknown, till the new testament dispensation took place: which is to say, that they were never to be considered as types at all. They could not be types, upon this supposition, under the old testament; for it is plain, that one thing cannot be considered as a type or shadow of another thing to come; unless there be a real knowledge, less or more, of that other thing, and particularly, that it is future, and neither past nor present. Nor can they be types to us under the new testament, to whom the good things of which they were shadows, are not things to come, but things present or already come. Whatever use they are of to us as metaphors or similitudes serving to illustrate spiritual things, in which view, indeed, they are divinely excellent, we have no more occasion for them as types. They were types in the proper sense of the word, to church members under the old testament, not to us\*.

\* These shadows are denominated most frequently from what they were under the old testament; but in Gal. iv. the apostle denominates the history of Sarah and Hagar from what it is to us under the new; calling it *an allegory*.

HENCE, too, we may observe the difference between sacraments and types: both are signs: but sacraments are signs of what is present; types, of what is to come.

IN the third place, a type is not to be considered as representing the antitype absolutely, but only in some particular respect. Thus, the offering of a sacrifice under the law represented the suffering of Christ unto death and the vicarious nature of his suffering; but it could not represent Christ our great high priest offering himself. Moses and Joshua might be called typical saviours. But they afforded no representation of salvation by Jesus Christ, as it is a salvation which he procured by the price of *his own* blood.

IN the fourth place, we are not to consider any thing as a type, unless it appears from the word of God, that he hath appointed it to be so. Sometimes a person, a thing, or a class of things is expressly declared to be typical. So the following particulars are declared: Jonah's being three days and three nights in the whale's belly; Melchisedec's priesthood, Psal. cx. 4. the Levitical priesthood, Heb. viii. 4, 5. the tabernacle itself with its appurtenances, Heb. ix. 9. the sacrifices that were offered there, Heb. ix. 13, 14, 23. Sometimes it appears, that such a person or thing is a type by the native consequence of what is declared in scripture. Thus, when we find a singular and peculiar event recorded in the history of Israel in the old testament not only alluded to, but expressly made use of to represent or set forth our Lord Jesus Christ, we may conclude that it is a type. Such is the case of the brazen serpent, John iii. 14. and of the Manna, John vi. 32. Again, persons or things bearing the same names with our Lord Jesus Christ indicates them to be types, provided that communication of names be manifestly on account of some analogy or resemblance in them to the character of the great antitype, as the mediator of the new covenant or the saviour of his people. Thus Joshua bears the name Jesus, because he was like our Lord Christ in bringing the people to the promised rest, Heb. iv. 8. Christ is several times called David; because the covenant of royalty made with David was a shadow of the covenant of



grace and promise made with Christ, Ezek. xxxiv. 23. and xxxvii. 24. Hosea iii. 5. Thus because the paschal lamb was a type of Christ, he is called a lamb and our passover, John i. 29. 1 Corinth. v. 7. and he bears the same name with the mercy seat; see Rom. iii. 25. compared with Heb. ix. 5. in the original Greek. Again, when the words which the Holy Spirit employs in describing the eminence or dignity of a person in the old testament, are manifestly too emphatical and sublime to be restricted to him, and the very same words are employed in the new testament in setting forth the excellency of our Lord Jesus Christ; we may warrantably conclude that person to have been a type of Christ. Thus by comparing Isai. xxii. 22. with Revel. iii. 7. it is evident that Eliakim was a type of Christ. Farther, we must always allow the representation of a person or thing to be a type of Christ, which not only bears a striking resemblance to something in Christ, but cannot be understood otherwise than as typical of him, without disregarding the circumstances of the text, the analogy of faith, or moral duty. The reason of this rule is obvious; and it shews the error of those who suppose that we can have no knowledge of what are to be accounted types but what is derived from the new testament: for when we meet with any thing in the old testament in the case now described, we may warrantably rank it among the typical things, even though there be no accommodation of it to the antitype in the new testament. We shall only add here, that nothing ought to be considered as a type, but such a prefiguration of something belonging to Christ, as was always, from the period of its institution, conducive to the faith and piety of the church of God\*.

HERE it is objected, “ that we, having been from  
 “ our childhood instructed in the way of salvation  
 “ through a mediator, are also early taught to apply the  
 “ prophecies and types of the former dispensation to this  
 “ mediator, but the Jewish church was in vastly different  
 “ circumstances. The Jews had no light into the me-

\* *Salderi Otia Theologica.*



“ diatorial and vicarious character of the Lord Jesus  
 “ Christ but what the old testament scriptures by them-  
 “ selves would afford. Nay, during the far greater part  
 “ of their church’s continuance, they had little more  
 “ than the five books of Moses\*.”

ANSWER. That the faith of the saints under the old testament had the same living redeemer and justice-satisfying and law-magnifying righteousness for its object, that it has under the new, has been shewn to be a revealed truth, which we are to believe, even though we should never be able to say particularly how or by what means, the Lord was pleased to bring old testament believers to that knowledge. We are not to seek to be wise above what is written. However, we may observe some things on this subject without incurring that censure.

THE ancient Israelites did not attain the knowledge of Christ by the Cabalistic art by which the Jews pretend to extract the knowledge of mysteries from superstitious observations on words and letters ; nor by their oral law, which they pretend Moses did not deliver to their fathers by writing, but by word of mouth. These seem to be among the fables and vain babblings, against which the apostle cautions Timothy. These were principal means of the apostacy of the Jews, and serve greatly to harden them in it.

BUT, in general, that the Lord was leading them by types and figures, and that he was thereby teaching them the way of salvation, might be understood by such as seriously considered to what purpose such a variety of outward and carnal things, so much bodily exercise about sacrifices and purifications were enjoined. They were taught then as well as now that *God is a Spirit*, and that he must be *worshipped in spirit and in truth*. They understood that it would be blasphemy once to imagine, that the infinite one stood in any need of such bodily services, or that, in themselves, they were any gratification to him. If such a suggestion occurred to an Israelite he well knew, that it was to be rejected with

\* An examination, &c. page 99.

the utmost abhorrence. Psal. l. 13. *Will I eat the blood of bulls or drink the blood of goats.* An Israelite must have known that the Lord utterly rejected their ceremonies and sacrifices, however elaborate and costly, unless, in these, they had a regard to things that were couched under them or represented by them, things of a sublime and spiritual nature, agreeable to the purity and spirituality of the divine nature. Let us only consider seriously to what conclusions such thoughts must have led a pious old testament worshipper, instructed in the true knowledge of God, and of the seed of the woman who was to bruise the serpent's head, while he was bringing his lamb or kid to be offered as an atonement for the sin he had committed, the Lord having assured him from his own mouth, that it would be to him *an offering of a sweet-smelling savour.*

BUT, more particularly, we observe, in the *first* place, that there is no reason to doubt that the patriarch and prophets taught what things were typical of Christ and his salvation. Surely Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and Abraham, who is particularly commended for his care in the instruction of *his children and his household after him*, would not fail to inform their respective families, of the meaning and design of the sacrifices they offered. As to the prophets in general, it was their work and office, while they continued to be sent to the church, to call the attention of the people to Christ as set forth in the types and prophecies. *To him gave all the prophets witness.* They could not be silent of that salvation, *of which*, we are assured, *they inquired and searched diligently : who prophesied,* saith Peter to christians under the new testament dispensation, *of the grace that should come unto you, searching what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow : unto whom it was revealed ; that not unto themselves, but to us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you.* They inquired, as the patriarchs had done before them, into the signification of the sacred types and of the words which the Lord had spoken by them ; particularly of

such as respected the sufferings of Christ and the glory that was to follow. With respect to the expression, *not unto themselves, but to us they did minister*, it is well known that the word *not* is often taken elliptically for *not only* or *chiefly*, as in Genesis xxxii. 28. And he said, *Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel*, that is, not only Jacob, 1 Sam. viii. 7. *They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me*, that is, not only thee. Acts v. 4. *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God*, that is, not to men only. So it is to be taken here; not to themselves only, but also to us they did minister. Indeed, if it were to be understood absolutely; there would be as much reason to conclude that old testament church members derived no knowledge of salvation at all from the ministrations of the prophets, as that they derived no knowledge from them of its being procured by the sufferings of Christ. The meaning of the expression is, that however much their ministrations had been for the benefit of themselves and other church-members in their time; they were still more for ours, in regard that, in our time, we have the actual fulfilment and clearer manifestation of those things of which they prophesied. This view of the words is as agreeable to the scope of the apostle as it is to the analogy of scripture doctrine. Nothing is farther from the apostle's design than to represent the faith of believers under the new testament as different, either in its nature or object, from what it had been under the old. The sufferings and glory of Christ, either as yet to come or as already brought to pass, were the object of the church's faith under both dispensations. The same apostle, in Acts ii. 30, 31. represents David as knowing the resurrection of Christ; which implies that he knew his death and the glory that was to follow. And in this passage of his first epistle, he prevents an objection; for, as one observes on the place, he is answering those who think, that they are nothing concerned in the things which were written by the prophets, and that these were intended for no body but the Jews of old. Nay, says the apostle, they were taught and inspired by God to prophesy, that they might not only benefit themselves and those of their own times, but all

posterity. And this was revealed to the prophets, for they foreknew that the sure word of prophecy which they were directed to deliver would be a light to the church in all succeeding ages; a light that would continue to grow brighter and more useful unto the end.

It has been represented as the meaning of this text, *That the predictions uttered by the old testament prophets were so far from being intelligible that the prophets themselves were engaged in a scrutiny and diligent search into them both as to the thing and the period of time which the spirit of Christ intimated in the obscurity of prophecy by their mouths\**. It is not unworthy of notice that, in this gloss, there seems to be a mistake of the construction of the apostle's words, *εἰς τινα ἢ ποτε καί ποτε*, which surely signify *into what time*; not *what thing*, or *what manner of time*. One should think that the consideration of these predictions being so far from intelligible was enough to deter the prophets from, instead of engaging them in, a scrutiny and diligent search. But engage in it they did. And what was the result? why a discovery that their prophecies were absolutely unintelligible till they were fulfilled. An astonishing comment indeed! worthy of the light that is said to be rising on the church! worthy of the genius of a Porphyry or a Collins to defend it!

BUT to return to our inquiry, namely, how the Lord's people, under the old testament dispensation, were instructed in the meaning of the types, we say, that what practical and evangelical knowledge the prophets attained in the course of their inquiry into the meaning of the types and prophecies, they faithfully communicated to the people. Their lips *kept knowledge*; and the people *received the explication of the law at their mouth*. Thus *the testimony of Jesus was the spirit of prophecy*. The same knowledge of the true meaning of the ceremonies and sacrifices seems to have been taught in the schools where the sons of the prophets were educated. The usefulness of the ancient prophets to the old testament church was, probably, one reason why they are cal-

\* An examination, &c. page 97.



led prophets in the new-testament who exercised their extraordinary gifts in opening and explaining the prophetic visions of the old testament, in which gospel truths are emblematically represented.

2. THE careful and attentive consideration of the types was another mean of attaining the knowledge of what was prefigured by them. Believers, under that dispensation, were not satisfied with a slight and superficial view of these types, nor would they rest in the external part or the surface of these observances; an evil which has been one principal cause of the apostacy of the Jews and of their obstinacy in it. Informed by the patriarchs and prophets, what things were to be considered as types, they would be sure to consider them carefully, to view them on all sides, to ponder the reference that each of them had to him that was to come, till they entered into the spirit and evangelical import of it.

3. SAVING and spiritual illumination was also necessary to a profitable discernment of what was contained in the types: for it was not every member of the visible church that attained this peculiar knowledge of divine mysteries. But they only to whom the Lord was pleased to give ears to hear, eyes to see, and hearts to understand. *The secret of the Lord was always with them that feared him.*

4. THE last mean we shall mention was that of ardent and persevering prayer. As it was a matter of a peculiar difficulty to attain the knowledge of the mind of God in the types and prophecies, it was necessary for his people to be the more earnest in crying to him with the Psalmist, *Open mine eyes that I may see wondrous things out of thy law.*

THEY greatly err, says a judicious writer, who measure the faith of the old testament church by the ignorance which prevailed at the time of Christ's coming, when the prophetic doctrine was obscured and almost buried in the thick darkness of ignorance and of human traditions, the interpreters of the law having taken away the key of knowledge, Luke xi. 52. The opinion which then prevailed about the temporal kingdom of the Messiah was diametrically opposite to the faith of God's an-



cient people, according to which no other Messiah than a spiritual Redeemer from sin was to be expected. It is as absurd to estimate the measure of the church's faith under the whole of the old testament dispensation, by the state of it at the time now referred to, as it would be to estimate the measure of her faith under the new, by those sparks of knowledge, which, at the beginning of the reformation, remained amidst the thick darkness of popery, when the doctrine of the gospel was only not quite extinguished. Our judgment of the measure of faith that was delivered to the old testament saints ought to be regulated by the prophetic doctrine, which as it is expressed in the scriptures of the old testament, is able, according to the apostle, 2 Tim. iii. 15. to make men wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Hence it was that Christ imputed the ignorance of the disciples as to his sufferings and entrance into glory, to their foolishness and slowness of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken, Luke xxiv. 25, 26. *Cloppenburgii sacrificiorum schola.*

THE ignorance of the disciples, who accompanied our Lord in the course of his personal mystery, has been offered as an objection to the doctrine now delivered concerning the faith of the old testament saints. But surely, as Cloppenburgh observes, our judgment in this matter ought to be regulated by the prophetic doctrine and by the examples of the exercise of faith recorded in the old testament. And there are three things which ought to be carefully attended to in the case of the disciples. 1. The Jewish church, as the author now mentioned justly observes, was then sunk into a state of gross ignorance and corruption. On this account, we may well suppose the disciples to be very ignorant and possessed with many prejudices, such as, that with respect to the temporal grandeur and dominion of the Messiah, when Christ took them under his tuition. Our Lord was pleased, that they should be brought out of that state of ignorance and be freed from their prejudices, not all at once, but by degrees. This is undoubtedly one reason why the measure of their knowledge appears so small, during our Lord's state of humiliation. 2. It seems im-

proper to estimate the measure of knowledge which the disciples really possessed by some things which they uttered in peculiar cases of darkness and temptation. Such was the case of the disciples going to Emmaus, when they said, *We trusted it had been he who should have redeemed Israel.* When Peter took Jesus and began to rebuke him, saying, *Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee;* it appears from what our Lord said to him, that he was under the prevailing influence of a temptation of Satan. Math. xvi. 22, 23. Sometimes the knowledge, which they really had, was not in exercise, or so much overpowered with contrary darkness and unbelief, that they were ready to deny that they had such knowledge. Of this we have a remarkable instance in John xiv. 4, 5. Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? 3. There was a peculiar dispensation in the case of the disciples, whereby their knowledge of the mystery of Christ was stinted to a small measure, till after the resurrection and ascension of Christ; or till the eminent outpouring of the spirit on the day of pentecost. Some passages intimate that they were sometimes exercised with a peculiar withdrawing of the enlightening influences of the spirit, which were necessary to a right apprehension of our Saviour's words. Mark vi. 52. *They considered not the miracle of the loaves; for their heart was hardened.* Luke xviii. 34. *And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.* Hence it is said, that, *when he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered what he had spoken about raising the temple of his body; and that they believed the scriptures and the word which Jesus had said.* This is not to be understood as if they had not believed truly before; but that their knowledge and faith before had been very indistinct, and much mingled with contrary prejudices.

HERE it may be proper to take notice of an objection which hath been made to what is said in the discourse on singing psalms concerning John xvi. 24. *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name.* "Our Lord's ex-

“pression,” says the objector, “cannot be referred to  
 “any personal exercise or occasional weakness of grace  
 “in his disciples ; because he tells them, the deficiency  
 “would be removed in the day of Pentecost by illumi-  
 “nation. *The time cometh, when I shall shew you plain-  
 “ly of the Father. At that day ye shall ask in my name.*  
 “But if the view of our Lord’s word in the discourse  
 “on singing psalms were just, the cure must have been  
 “by sanctifying quickening grace—and not by illumi-  
 “nation,—as the saviour saith\*.”

ANSWER. It is was shewn in the discourse, that the negative particle is in scripture often taken comparatively ; and surely it cannot be taken absolutely here ; there could be no acceptable asking of the father, without coming to him ; and no coming to him but by Christ or in the name of Christ : so that if the disciples had hitherto made no use at all of Christ’s name in asking, they had never come to the father, nor put up one acceptable petition to him ; which is very absurd. But what our Lord intends is that the use which they had hitherto made of his name in asking, was little or as none, compared with the use that they would be enabled to make of it, through the distinct and clear views of it that they would attain, when the Holy Spirit should be poured out abundantly upon them. The objector speaks strangely, as if he imagined, that the influences of the Holy spirit poured out on the day of Pentecost were *enlightening*, but *not sanctifying quickening influences*. But surely, though some formalists might even then have a sort of illumination of their natural understanding which was not sanctifying : yet that sort of illumination which the apostles and other true believers were partakers of, was in its own nature, quickening and sanctifying. It is an illumination which, according to the measure of it, makes them act faith, and disposes them to ask largely in Christ’s name : as Christ intimated, when he said to the woman of Samaria, *If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would*

*have given thee living water. And again, every man that heareth and learneth of the Father, cometh unto me. Beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image.*

IN the discourse on singing psalms, the last verse of the sixth psalm was adduced as an instance of pleading upon Christ's name under the old testament. To this it has been objected, "That the term redeemer is often applied, in the old testament, to Jehovah the God of Israel, without any reference to the Messiah: and it is thus applied on account of deliverances, public and private, which God had wrought for his people, Deut. vii. 8. Psal. lxxviii. 35. Jerem. i. 34. And there is no reason to understand it any otherwise here. David prays to God under the character of his redeemer, as he had often delivered him from imminent danger. Besides whoever was the person whom he addresses, he does not plead in the name of another; he does not plead with God for Christ's sake, or with the father in the name of the son according to the saviour's direction; and therefore is nothing to the purpose\*."

ANSWER. The temporal deliverances of the church, particularly that of Israel out of Egypt, are called *improperly and figuratively redemptions*; as they were fruits and effects of that *strictly proper redemption* which is by our Lord Jesus Christ, and *those* might well serve to lead the mind of the Israelites to the believing contemplation of *this*: and therefore it is allowed that the church and particular believers under the old testament took occasion from temporal deliverances to celebrate God in Christ as their redeemer; but it by no means follows that *the worker of such a temporal deliverance* was all that they meant by that name: 1. Because this is not adequate to the proper meaning of the word: 2. Because here and in other places of the old testament the Lord is called the church's *redeemer* absolutely, without reference to any temporal deliverance: 3. Because a mere temporal redeemer was not such a one as the sinful and

\* An examination, &c. page 79, 80,



miserable case of man required : 4. Because whatever occasion a temporal deliverance might give a person or people to look to God as their redeemer, yet it does not follow, that this was the adequate reason of the designation. Were a beggar to receive large alms from a king, the incident might induce the beggar to call him a good and bountiful king : but it would be strange for any person to infer, that the beggar called him a king merely because he had given him large alms.

IN this verse of the sixth psalm, it seems plain that, in the names that the psalmist gives to God, of his strength and his redeemer, he saw the ground he had to pray and hope that the *words of his mouth and the meditation of his heart would be acceptable in the sight of God*. He had acknowledged himself a poor sinner, chargeable with innumerable errors and secret faults ; and, therefore, he could not see the ground of his acceptance with God in himself ; he could see it only in Christ his strength and his Redeemer.

NOR is it any objection, that he whom the psalmist calls his strength and his Redeemer, is no other than he to whom this prayer is addressed : for, by faith, the psalmist saw Christ, as his strength and his Redeemer in the father, and the father in him, according to what Christ says in John xiv. 9, 10. *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. Believest thou not, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me ?*

THE objector paraphrases the ninth verse of the eighty-fourth psalm thus : “ Cause the light of thy gracious countenance to shine again on the face of thine anointed—who now breathes his earnest request before thee. Hast thou not caused thy sacred oil to be poured on my head, and thereby designated me to be the ruler of thy people : and wilt thou grant me the privilege which the meanest of thy people enjoys\* !”

THE objector appears to have no good reason for dissenting from so many valuable christian commentators, who understand the expression *looking on the face of thine anointed*, of God’s looking on the face of Christ, whom

\* An examination &c. page 81, 82.



the psalmist regarded as his mediator and advocate. 1. Because our Lord Jesus was even then God's anointed one, the Christ, as the undertaking head and surety of the new covenant. So he is called by David in the second psalm, *Why do the people imagine a vain thing against the Lord and against his anointed.* There is also a manifest correspondence between the phrase here used and that of the apostle in 2 Corinth. iv. 6. *the face of Jesus Christ.* 2. The phrase *to look upon* here signifies to regard *with* acceptance and complacency; as a similar expression is used in 2 Kings iii. 14. Surely David who said, *Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified,* would be far, very far from thinking that he was acceptable *in himself* before such a holy Lord God. The psalmist was deeply sensible that for God to look upon him *in himself*, as a child of fallen Adam, covered with the guilt and power of sin, would have been to him utter destruction: for *if he but look on the earth it trembleth; if he touch the hills, they smoke.* 3. This view of the words agrees best with the context; for the words, *Look upon the face of thine anointed,* may well be considered as the psalmist's plea for the hearing and the answering of prayer. We have no reason to suppose that the psalmist would ground his suit upon any thing short of Christ: for the anointing of David to be king over Israel was but a type or shadow of Christ's mediatorial office; and the psalmist's remembrance of the former could be no otherwise useful to him in his dealing with God, than as it served to promote and encourage his faith in the latter. But it is more unreasonable still to suppose that the whole church would make David's appointment to a temporal kingdom without any regard to Christ, their plea for the hearing of prayer: for this is the language, not only of David, but of the whole church militant; *Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.* It has been often observed that is the way of Socinians so to wrest the divine words of scripture as to put a low and trivial sense upon them. And is not this done, when these very emphatical expressions, *Behold—and look upon the face of thine anoint-*

ed, are supposed to signify no more than a regard to the designation of one to an earthly and temporal kingdom.

THE discourse on the singing of psalms has been censured for representing Christ to be meant in Daniel ix. 17. *for the Lord's sake*; And it has been objected, "that if we take this in connexion with the following context, it will not appear that Daniel had any reference to the favour in it: for speaking more explicitly in this respect, he says in verses 18 and 19. "*We do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear, O Lord, forgive, O Lord, hearken and do, &c.*" But if we should even suppose that Daniel had here a view to the *Messiah*, yet the name Lord, which he uses, is a general term: it imports *dominion* in general, and is perfectly consistent with an ignorance of Christ's mediatorial and vicarious character as revealed in the new testament; and according to which christians are to use his name explicitly in pleading with God\*."

ANSWER. With the christian church in general we believe that *for the Lord's sake*, means for Christ's sake. 1. Because we have a plurality of divine persons intimated in this verse. The prayer is formally directed to God in the person of the father, for the sake of the Lord the second person of the glorious trinity, the mediator. 2. Because Christ is frequently called *the Lord*, Psal. cx. 1. John xx. 28. Luke ii. 11. 3. Because Christ was always the church's way of coming to God and of obtaining salvation, as hath been shewn from John xiv. 6. Acts xv. 11. and other places. To this other parallel passages of the old testament may be added, as, 2 Sam. vii. 21. *For thy word's sake*, that is, for the sake of Christ, who is called *the Word of God*, John i. 1. Rev. xix. 13. thou hast done all these great things: and 2 Sam. xii. 25. *He called his name Jedediah, because of the Lord*, or for the sake of the Lord Christ. In psal. lxxx. 15. *Ve gnal ben* which is in our translation, *and the branch*, is rendered, by Junius and Tremellius and others, *and for the sake of the Son*, and by the Chal-

\* Examination, &c. page 82, 83.

dee paraphrase, *for the sake of the king Messiah*. See Pool's synopsis.

THE objector's interpretation makes the expression *for the Lord's sake* to be but instead of *for thy own sake*: and hereby the phrase is supposed to be *figurative* without any necessity; since the *proper* sense is perfectly agreeable to the connexion here, and to what is taught in other places of scripture. The name *Lord* or *Adonai* which is here used, is given to Christ as mediator in psal. cx. 1. and has particular respect to that property in and dominion over his people, which is founded in *his redeeming them by his own blood*. When Daniel sought the turning away the Lord's anger from his church and people, and the manifestation of his special favour for the sake of the Messiah, he surely hoped that God would grant his request for the sake of the Messiah as the mediator and surety of his people; because, abstracting from his mediatorial office, he was no Messiah; and there was nothing more in him that could be a ground of hope to his people, than there was in God absolutely considered. Sinners had nothing to expect for his sake otherwise than as he was a mediator and surety: and therefore Daniel, who is here confessing his own sin and that of his people, must have considered him as the mediator and surety of himself and his people, otherwise he could have had no ground to seek or expect mercy and salvation for his sake. All this was manifestly inconsistent with absolute ignorance of our Lord's mediatorial and vicarious character.

THE expression in the next verse instead of leading us away from Christ, leads us to him; because all the saving mercies that God has for any of Adam's ruined family are wrapt up in Christ. They are sure mercies of David or of our Lord Jesus Christ, Isa. lv. 3. compared with Jude 21.

SECT. VI. Inferences with respect to the unity of the church under the old and new testament dispensation, and with respect to the propriety of our singing the psalms of David in our solemn worship.

FROM what has been advanced in the two foregoing sections, it is evident, that it was one and the same co-

venant of grace, which, under the old testament, was exhibited in word, sacraments, ceremonies and sacrifices, and which is now under the new, more clearly exhibited in the word and sacraments only. The proper condition of that everlasting covenant, namely, Christ's obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, was then as much present to God as it is now; and was made present to the faith of worshippers in the typical sacrifices. And all the promises were then as well as now, *yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God*. Thus the gospel, or the covenant of grace which was exhibited or preached unto the fathers was the same which is preached to us, as the apostle declares, Heb. iv. 2.

HENCE we see the error of the Socinians, who represent the religion of the old testament and that of the new to be two different religions, saying, that Moses was the founder of the one, and Christ of the other. Surely all that from the beginning of the world had the true Messiah for the object of their faith and hope were not almost but altogether christians. It is true, the disciples were called christians first at Antioch; but this no more implies that they were not christians under the old testament, than that they were not so from the resurrection of Christ to the time of Paul and Barnabas's preaching at Antioch. Though the giving of this name might imply that there was something new in the manner in which they professed the religion of Christ; yet it also implied that *the religion itself* was not new; and that they bore testimony against the gross apostacy of the Jews from the religion and the hope of their fathers.

THOUGH the church was under an obligation before the coming of Christ, which she is not under since, to the practice of many ceremonial observances, as a person may be called to the performance of several duties in one condition or situation, which he is not called to in another: the church, notwithstanding this *accidental* difference, is under both the old and new testament dispensations, *essentially* one and the same church. Jesus Christ was king and head of the church under the old testament as well as under the new. Zechariah ix. 9. *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter of Jerusa-*



len, behold thy king cometh; he who has been thy king from the beginning of thy church state.

THE person of Christ, as revealed in the first promise, was the foundation on which the church was first erected; and on which, as farther declared by the apostles and prophets, it has stood all along, and on which it will stand to the end of the world; according to that remarkable word of Christ, *On this rock, namely, his divine person, will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* The building upon this foundation, under both dispensations, consists of professed believers: *Ye,* says the apostle Peter to them that believe, *are built up a spiritual house.* It is an invariable maxim in the church of Christ from the beginning to the end, that its doctrine should be that alone which is taught in his word; and its form of worship, of discipline and government that alone which is appointed in his word. Hence nothing is more contrary to the constitution and welfare of the church either under the old or new testament dispensation, than attempting to change its ordinances and to introduce something into its worship which God never appointed, but which men, in the greatness of their wisdom, positively hold to be necessary for promoting devotion.

THAT the church is one under the old and new testament is also evident from this, that when the Gentiles were called to the faith of Christ, they became *one body* with the old testament church, *the partition wall* which had stood so long between the Jews and Gentiles being *broken down*: and they become *professedly fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God*, making the same profession of faith with Abraham, David and the other saints recorded in the old testament, and being thus brought into the same house or family with them, Ephes. ii. 14. 15. Besides believing Gentiles are not represented as forming a new church, but as *ingrafted into the stock* of the old testament church, Rom. xi. 17.

It is also to be observed, that, in the old testament, the worship of the new testament church is often predicted under the names of old testament usages, Malachi ii. 11. *For from the rising up of the sun to the going down of the*



*same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name and a pure offering* It is also observable that, in the 7th chapter of the revelation, the new testament church is represented as consisting of the twelve tribes of Israel. And the entrance of the Gentiles into the new testament church, and their attendance on its ordinances are represented by the prophets as their gathering together to Jerusalem, Jerem. iii. 17. Nothing less seems to be implied in these passages than that the same spiritual and evangelical worship with the addition of typical rites, was truly offered to God under the old testament, which is offered to him under the new without those rites; and that persons under the new testament by their attendance on gospel ordinances wherever administered according to the Lord's appointment, would profess themselves members of the same church; of which the Israelites professed themselves to be members by going up to worship at Jerusalem.

FROM what has been advanced concerning the reality of the church's knowledge of the obedience and death of Christ, the futility is manifest of what is so much insisted on by our opponents, namely, that, church-members under the old testament being ignorant of the obedience and death of Christ as the medium or channel through which spiritual blessings are communicated, the psalms which were suitable to their worship, cannot be suitable to ours. We have seen that there was no such invincible ignorance of that medium under the old testament as they imagine; and therefore the conclusions drawn from it are null and void.

AGAIN, since the saving knowledge and faith of church members had the same objects and were of the same nature under both the old and new testament dispensations, the reasoning in the discourse on the singing of psalms must be just and conclusive, that if the words of the psalms have not spiritual and evangelical truth, in their only true and proper signification, they were as little calculated for the edification of the church under the old testament as under the new.

FROM what has been said concerning the unity of the old and new testament church, we learn that to adhere to the approved examples under the old testament of what the glorious head of the church hath not abrogated, in the form of religious worship, is, by no means, to judaize ; but, on the contrary, is indispensably necessary to evidence that we truly belong to that church of Christ which has been one and the same ever since the giving of the first promise ; and to our bearing a suitable testimony against the present apostacy of the Jews from that church to which they once did and we now do belong.

#### SECT. VII. Of the Obscurity of the Psalms.

BUT it is objected, “ that, though it should be allowed, that these evangelical truths are in some degree revealed in the old testament, and are to be found in some of the scripture songs ; yet the whole language and ordinances of the old testament are in themselves obscure and were intended to veil the subject. It must be very unsuitable, not to say more, to confine ourselves to these forms and to this language now, when all the glorious things, which they but darkly and imperfectly represented, are revealed in so full, so clear, and so explicit a manner, that he may run who reads ; and worship not in the letter, but in the spirit. Must we never celebrate these glorious things in songs of praise, but in language that is not adequate to our knowledge or our views of them ? nor must it be forgotten that such confinement will be injurious to our souls. In singing of burnt offerings, bullocks, rams, goats, feasts and the like, we cannot avoid thinking of these ordinances and services. Nay the idea of them will first strike our minds, and we may not get rid of it so soon as we would wish\*.”

ANSWER. If the knowledge and views that our opponents have attained of spiritual and evangelical things

\* Examination, &c. page 101, 102, 104, 105.

he so enlarged, as their words seem to import, one should think, the psalms would not be obscure to them : for true knowledge of these things, is a knowledge by which we understand the scriptures. How did Christ enlarge the knowledge of his disciples after his resurrection ? why, *he opened their understanding to understand the scriptures.* And what scriptures ? No other surely than those mentioned in the preceeding verse, the law of Moses, the prophets and the psalms.

BUT if by the obscurity of the psalms, through the mention of the old testament observances, and by the language of them being in itself, intended to veil the subject, be meant, (and what else can be meant by these words ? ) that the psalms, literally translated, are not adapted to convey instruction, as to the way of salvation through the obedience and sufferings of our redeemer, to the hearers of the word ; we deny that the old testament, and particularly the psalms, are at all chargeable with such obscurity. And, herein, we tread in the steps of our protestant ancestors, and make use of their arguments for the perspicuity of the holy scriptures against the church of Rome. If it be said, that papists charged obscurity upon the whole scriptures : we answer, that some of them used to speak much in the manner of our opponents. Gordon, a Jesuit, quoted by Glassius, asserts that the causes of ambiguity which he enumerates have “ place “ in the style of the old testament only, and acknowledges that the style of the new testament is plain, “ perspicuous and free from ambiguity.” And as it is manifest, that no book of the old testament is plainer or better adapted to the general use and edification of church members than the book of psalms ; the charge of obscurity brought against it, must be equally against every other book of the old testament. Protestants have usually refuted the Papists by shewing that the scripture asserts its own perspicuity. Now, it is evident, that the texts which they quote to this purpose, have a direct and immediate respect to the books of the old testament : many of them being from the old testament itself : such as Deuteron. xxx. 2.

*For this commandment which I command thee this day, is not hidden from thee (from thy understanding) neither is it far from thee or unsuitable to thy capacity, for so the phrase, as Glassius informs us, is used by the Hebrew writers. To the same purpose is Prov. vi. 20, 23. where Solomon, in verse 20, 21. exhorts to the study of the divine word; and to move us thereto, gives a most engaging representation of what it is found to be in the experience of such as attain a saving knowledge of it, verse 22. and then, lest any should complain of obscurity, adds, For the commandment is a lamp and the law is light, verse 23. Psalm cxix. 105. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light to my path, and verse 130. The entrance of thy words giveth light: it giveth understanding unto the simple. Psalm xix. 78. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. Even the passages, produced out of the new testament for the vindication of the perspicuity of the scriptures, have a direct reference to those of the old testament, such as, 2 Pet. i. 19. We have also a more sure word of prophecy whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, till the day dawn and the day-star arise in your hearts. So long as we are in the dark place of this world, which is, in the esteem of the Lord's people a dark and, as the Greek word here signifies, a polluted place, the Lord having said to them concerning it, This is not your rest, because it is polluted; as long as we are in such a place, and any of the darkness or filthiness of it remains with us, we must make use of the prophetic word, that is, of the old testament as well as the new; attending to it, as to a light that gives sure and infallible direction, till the day of glory dawn, and φωσφερος that which bringeth light, arise in the perfection of heaven in our hearts, or when that manifestation of him who is the bright and morning star, already begun in our hearts, shall be perfected. Again, the argument for the perspicuity of the scripture, arising from the declared end for which it was written, concludes strongly for the perspicuity of the psalms. Rom. xv. 4.*



For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope. The scripture is given to make the simple wise unto salvation, 2 Timothy iii. 15. Our opponents object the Hebrew idioms and figurative expressions. The papists objected the same things against the perspicuity of the scriptures. Protestant divines, and we with them, answer, that there are no Hebraisms but what may be easily observed by a person that reads the scriptures with attention : and that as to figurative expressions, they are used not to obscure divine things, but to express them more emphatically and forcibly\*. The papists asked, Why we explain the scriptures ; and our opponents, on the same account, ask us, Why we explain the psalms. The answer that used to be given by the protestants is sufficient in the present case, namely, That the perspicuity of the scripture is such as does not at all supersede the necessity of the inward illumination of the spirit, or of the use of interpretation and other means of promoting our attention and our improvement of that perspicuity. Nor will it avail our opponents to say the papists were against the *reading* of scriptures : whereas the question at present is only about *singing* ; for it is evident that the perspicuity of the psalms is denied, when they are represented as so obscure that church members cannot ordinarily be supposed to attain such an understanding of them, as is necessary for the purpose of singing. We allow, that there are more difficult places of scripture ; and that, even in the psalms, there are texts which, compared with others, may be said to be such. Yet the book of psalms, compared with the other books of scripture, must be ranked among the more plain, rather than among the more difficult. This must be evident to every attentive reader of the scriptures, when he compares the book of Psalms with the Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, Ezekiel, Daniel and other books. Unless the psalms had been among the plainest parts of scripture, they could not have been sung to edification in the old testament church, when the means of knowledge and the

\* See Henrici Akingii. Soc. Commun. part II.



supply of the spirit of Christ were more scanty than under the new testament dispensation.

WITH respect to the understanding of the old testament scriptures, there was a great difference between the condition of church members before the coming of Christ and their condition after it. Before his coming, they were brought to some real understanding of the things contained in his word in a way more adapted to the state of childhood; as when a person comes at length to learn something of the contents of a book, either, if he has but newly begun to read, by spelling and dividing the words into syllables; or, if it be in a language of which he has attained, as yet, but little knowledge, by the help of a grammar and dictionary. Whereas, under the new-testament, christians come to the understanding of what is contained in the old testament scriptures in a more manly and less difficult way; as a person who can read well and has a competent knowledge of the language in which a book is written comes more readily at the information which it contains. There are three things which give us such an advantage over the members of the old testament church: The first is, That Christ is actually come: The second, That we have the new testament scriptures: The third, The more abundant supply of the spirit of Christ. Thus, what was prophecy to them is fulfilled to us: what was practised by them as a type more obscurely setting forth him that was to come, is now to be contemplated by us as a metaphor or allegory clearly setting forth him who is already come. Thus when we meet with representations of typical observances in the psalms, we are to consider them as figures which, in this case, as accompanied with the light of the new testament revelation, are undoubtedly attended with the advantage, to use the words of Dr. Blair in his lecture on figurative language, with the advantage of giving us a much clearer and more striking view of the principal object, than if it were expressed in simple terms and divested of its accessory idea. This, adds the professor, is indeed their principal advantage, in virtue of which they are properly said to illustrate-a subject or to throw light upon it.

As to the insinuation, that spiritual and evangelical things, are not found in the proper meaning of the words of the psalms, but are only accommodated to these words; it is not to say that these things were but obscurely revealed, but that they were not revealed at all. This belongs to the subject of the three foregoing sections. It may only be observed here, that these psalms could not afford solid comfort to the church of God, if the true and proper meaning of the words did not contain the truths of the gospel concerning the person and satisfaction of Christ: for he is the consolation of Israel; Luke ii. 25. and, as it is expressed in the first question of the Heidelberg catechism, it is our only consolation in life and in death, that, both in our soul and body, we are not our own, but the property of our most faithful Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who, having by his own blood, made full satisfaction for all our sins, delivered us from all the power of the devil.

OBJECTION. "Though we should allow the things of the gospel to be truly contained in the book of psalms; yet the old testament and consequently the psalms of it, are represented as a veil which hides a person's face, so that he cannot have a just conception of it. 2 Corinth. iii. 12, 13. *Seeing, then, that we use great plainness of speech, and not as Moses who put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished.* The veil on the face of Moses represented the obscurity of the Jewish dispensation."

ANSWER. The objector confounds the old testament scriptures with the old testament dispensation. Though we should allow, with some expositors, that the veil upon the face of Moses signified partly the types and figures of that dispensation, yet it does not follow that the veil is the scriptures of the old testament, in which there is much light for the explanation of these types and figures\*.

As to the sense of this passage, some thoughts may be offered with all deference to the judgment of others ; remembering that we are not to *walk in craftiness nor to handle the word of God deceitfully*, but endeavouring by *manifestation of the truth to commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God*.

1. It appears evident that *the veil upon Moses' face* did not signify either the scriptures or the dispensation of the old testament : because what the apostle says of it does not agree either to the one or to the other : for it is represented as internal and upon *the hearts* of the Israelites : and it remained *untaken away* when the apostle wrote, which could not be said of the old testament dispensation ; for that was already antiquated ; and it is represented as what is certainly to be taken away in the conversion of the Jews in the latter days. Surely, this is not applicable either to the scriptures or to the dispensation of the old testament.

2. *The glory of the face of Moses* is not to be understood as a representation of the glory of Christ : because it is the representation of *a glory which is done away* : and which is opposed to the glory of Christ, in comparison with which it has *no glory*. The glory of Moses' face, therefore, represents the glory of the outward dispensation of the moral law in its covenant form and of the ceremonial institutions.

*The fear of the Israelites*, when they beheld the glory of Moses' countenance\*, seems to represent the proper effect, which the law, both moral and ceremonial, rightly apprehended, had upon the hearts and consciences of the Israelites : filled them with a sense of their sin and misery, and shut them up to the faith of Christ : in which case there was a looking to the end of that which is abolished.

*The veil put upon Moses' face* signified that blindness and prejudice of mind which hindered the law from having the effect now mentioned upon the Israelites. This veil is *upon the hearts of the Israelites in the reading of the old testament*, rendering the whole of it unprofitable to them.

\* Exodus xxxiv. 30.

But when the Lord the Spirit shall take it away, then they *shall turn to the Lord*: then they shall behold, as all true believers do, *the glory of the Lord in the glass* of the scriptures of the old and new testament, *with open face*, that is, the veil being taken away by the spirit of the Lord\*.

MOSES'S *putting the veil upon his face* signified that with regard to a great part of the Israelites the law would by no means have the salutary effect of making them despair in themselves, and shutting them up to the faith of Christ. But the apostles had more comfortable views of the success of the gospel under the new testament dispensation; foreseeing that it would be effectual to the salvation of multitudes. *Therefore*, says the apostle, *having this hope, we use great plainness of speech*, declaring our confidence with respect to the effect of the gospel, calling it *the ministration of the spirit*. And not as Moses who put a veil upon his face; which prefigured far otherwise with respect to the effect of the outward dispensation of the law upon the Israelites.

THE objector represents the allusions in the psalms to old testament ordinances as tending to distract the minds of worshippers. But this representation is contrary to common sense and experience as to figures in general, and contrary to the experience of christians with respect to the figurative language of the psalms in particular. These words of the psalmist *I will go into thy house with burnt-offerings*, no more distract the mind with the thought of old testament ordinances and services than these words of the apostle to the Romans, *I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God*. Nor are we more distracted by the figurative expression in either of these passages, than we are by that in the words of our Lord, *My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven*. How absurd would it be to complain of the figurative expression here in this manner! That when we read it, we cannot avoid thinking of bread; and that we cannot get rid of the thought of bread so soon as we would

\* See Mr. Boston's notes on the Marrow of Modern Divinity.



with. Yet what is objected about the allusions in the psalms to the ceremonial usages as distracting the minds of worshippers, is no better, no less absurd.

BUT if it be said, that, in the expressions quoted from the psalms, the principal object is not revealed, and, while we have the accessory only, it cannot be instructive; we must still answer, that it reflects upon the wisdom of God to suppose that the psalms abound with expressions which could be no more instructive to church members under the old testament, than they are under the new. To present to worshippers the accessory, however "taken from present circumstances, and in a manner ever so much calculated to touch the heart," must be unavailing, while the principal object which is ultimately designed, and which alone can afford saving or spiritual instruction, is kept out of view. That this was not the case is evident from what has been said concerning the knowledge which the old testament church had of Christ, and of the things of Christ. They might know what was the great object designed to be set forth in such figures or allusions by the promise of Christ which had before been given to the church, by the emphasis of the expressions, or by the context. As to us under the new testament, it is not denied by our opponents that the thing signified by such figurative expressions or allusions is clearly revealed. Hence the case of parables relating to a subject altogether unknown, is no way to the purpose: for the grand subject of the typical allusions or expressions was *really* revealed under the old testament, and more *clearly* revealed under the new. Nor can it be denied that the most proper and direct end of our Lord's parables was to make use of earthly things by way of similitude to render the apprehension of spiritual things more easy and familiar to his followers. "This way of teaching," says Erasmus, "is the most simple and the best adapted to the rude and ignorant. However low and puerile it appears to the wise men of the world, it was the way of communicating instruction that seemed good to eternal wisdom. The philosophers darkened the minds of their hearers with artful and intricate syllogisms: rhetoricians captiva-



“ted the affections by the copiousness and admirable  
 “flow of their language: the Pharisees filled their dis-  
 “courses with abstruse notions that were far above the  
 “capacity of the common people: but our Lord Jesus  
 “chose a method of teaching that was the most simple  
 “and remote from affectation.” We may add,  
 that parables serve to kindle in us a desire to know  
 what is contained in them; and frequently afford a  
 sweet experience of our Lord’s condescension in making  
 use of earthly similitudes to introduce us insensibly and  
 before we are aware, to the contemplation of heavenly  
 and spiritual things.

AFTER all, there is reason to apprehend, that this ob-  
 jection against the use of the scripture psalmody in our  
 worship, namely, that it is rendered obscure by the allu-  
 sions to the ceremonial law, cannot be the principal ob-  
 jection of our opponents, though it is chiefly insisted  
 on as the most plausible and popular. For, in the first  
 place, the passages of the psalms wherein we meet with  
 such allusions are far from being numerous. It is obvi-  
 ous, that the bulk of the psalms have an immediate re-  
 ference to that practice and experience of godliness,  
 which has been in all ages of the church, and ever will  
 be, the same: and, in the 2nd place, such a multitude of  
 verses of the original psalms that have no such allusions  
 to old testament rites are left out or altered in the new  
 psalmody corrected by Mr. Barlow. The attempt to  
 thrust any one of these verses out of the place which it  
 possessed in the public and solemn worship of the church  
 needs a solid and weighty reason to justify it. And the  
 question comes home to the conscience of every follow-  
 er of the new scheme of psalmody, Why dost thou re-  
 fuse to sing such a verse of a song that the Spirit of God  
 has been pleased to give thee in his word?

SECT. VIII. Of the Scripture-songs being inade-  
 quate to the knowledge and attainments of church mem-  
 bers under the New Testament.

IT is farther objected, “that the language of the  
 “psalms in the old testament is not adequate to our

“ views of the glorious things of the gospel. Do we  
 “ not know more of God and of his works both of na-  
 “ ture and grace, than was revealed to the Jews? Do  
 “ we not know more of the Father, Son and Holy Spi-  
 “ rit—and of their respective work in the salvation of  
 “ sinners? Do we not know more of the love of Christ  
 “ in dying, the just for the unjust that he might bring us  
 “ to God? Are not our souls possessed with a varie-  
 “ ty of warm affections, when we contemplate our chief  
 “ beloved hanging on the cross, with the load of all our  
 “ sins upon him, and giving up his life for rebels and  
 “ enemies? And must we never sing a new song for re-  
 “ demption actually compleated; nor otherwise than un-  
 “ der the veil of sacrificed bullocks, goats, &c.? We  
 “ are enabled to look far into a future state,—life and  
 “ immortality are brought to light by the gospel, &c\*.”

ANSWER. I. The making use of discourse of this  
 kind to prove that there is a divine warrant or institu-  
 tion for the singing of human compositions in solemn  
 worship, is exceedingly dangerous: for this is the pur-  
 port of it: it seems to us highly proper and convenient  
 and eligible; and therefore it is a divine institution.  
 How many rites of human invention will be introduced  
 into religious worship, if plausible reasoning about the  
 fitness and usefulness of them be once admitted as the  
 proper way to make out a warrant for their introduc-  
 tion? and on the other hand, how many divine ordinances  
 in which men can see no fitness or usefulness will be laid  
 aside? it is a Protestant principle, that no particular  
 mean, or way of worshipping God, is warrantable, which  
 cannot be proved to have been instituted by God, either  
 by the express words of scripture or by consequences ne-  
 cessarily deduced from them; or, in other words, that  
 divine revelation is the only foundation, the only rule  
 and standard of all that religious worship which is ac-  
 ceptable to God. Without adhering to this principle,  
 we cannot preserve the ordinances of our holy religion  
 either pure or entire.

\* An examination, &c. pages 104, 105.

2. THE objector insinuates, that the doctrines he enumerates, are not contained in the psalms ; and if not in the psalms, then not in the old testament, since we need not expect to find any point of evangelical doctrine, in any other part of the old testament, which is not at all in the psalms. Herein the objector contradicts a Protestant principle which used to be held by orthodox divines against Papiists and Socinians, namely, *the perfection of the old testament asserted by itself*. Psal. xix. 7. *The law of the Lord is perfect. Partes integrales*, says a very estimable writer, in *doctrina legis et evangelii*—*non modo in universis testamenti utriusque libris, sed etiam in solo Pentateucho Moses ; item in libris prophetarum, absque novi testamenti auxilio deprehenduntur, utpote quo verbum εγγαφον clarius, non perfectius, est redditum*: That is, “the integral, “or constituent parts, consisting of the doctrine of the “law and of the gospel, are found not only in all the “books of each of the testaments, but even in the pen- “tateuch or five books of Moses alone ; likewise in the “books of the prophets without the addition of the “new testament ; which addition is to be considered as “rendering the scripture more clear, but not more per- “fect ; that is, it adds no new article to the substance “either of the law or of the gospel.”

3. THE objection seems to be contrary to another Protestant principle, namely, *that not only the truths which are found in the express words of any part of scripture, but those also which are deducible therefrom by necessary consequence, are justly reckoned to be taught in that part of scripture*. So our Lord assures us that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was taught by the words which were spoken to Moses out of the bush, Luke xx. 37. Thus many truths, besides what are formally expressed in the words of a psalm, are deducible from them by necessary consequence. The death of Christ is a plain consequence from these words ; *Thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption*. That Christ is the true God, follows from these words in the second psalm, *Kiss the Son*. Admitting that whatever is thus deducible from the express words of a psalm, is taught in it, he must, surely, have a consummate knowledge of the force and

connexion of every word in the book of psalms, who can warrantably say, that such an article of evangelical truth is not taught in all that book. Hence it is evident, that they who complain of any penury of evangelical matter in the psalms, or who suppose there is more of it in human composures, only betray their inattention to the scriptures and their obdurate attachment to a perverted taste.

4. THOUGH the old testament church in general had not such outward means and advantages as we have ; yet we are, by no means, thence to conclude, that the spiritual attainments of those particular eminent saints whose exercises are recorded in the psalms were inferior to ours. The lively exercises of faith represented in the 23d. and many other psalms, the evangelical exercise of godly sorrow for sin as exemplified in the li. the xxxii and cxxx. psalms, the disinterested zeal for the welfare of the church of Christ expressed in cxxxii. and cxxxvii. psalms, and the rich experience of spiritual profit by the word set forth in the cxix. psalm, will make the best christians among us ashamed to talk of the language of the psalms being inadequate to their attainments ? surely there can be no matter fitter to be sung by the church in her solemn worship than the infallible examples recorded in the psalms, of solid piety and of the lively exercise of the true grace of God.

OBJECTION. " Our Lord declares, *For I say unto you, among those that are born of woman there is not a greater than John the Baptist ; but he that is least in the kingdom is greater than he.* The kingdom of God or, as Matthew, in a parallel passage, records it, the kingdom of heaven, is but another expression for the gospel dispensation, which is evident, both because our Lord almost always uses it in this sense, and because the following verse, in Matthew's gospel, confines it thereto. John Baptist neither wrought miracles nor predicted future events to any such degree as many prophets that had arisen before him : consequently, the only point in which he was superior to them all was, his superior knowledge of gospel mysteries : and if the least in the kingdom of God, the weakest true christ-



“ tian, under the full light of the gospel, be greater than  
 “ John, it must be in the same sense, that is to say, he is  
 “ acquainted with many things in the plan of salvation,  
 “ which were not revealed to John himself; and there-  
 “ fore such a christian knows much more of these glo-  
 “ rious things than the greatest old testament pro-  
 “ phet\*.”

ANSWER. All this can be nothing to the objec-  
 tor's purpose, unless he could shew that the members  
 of the new testament church are as much above the  
 use of the old testament scriptures in reading or sing-  
 ing them, as the measure of the knowledge which  
 those church members attain is above the measure of  
 it which was attained by church members under the  
 old testament. No superiority of knowledge, attain-  
 able in this life, can set church members above the  
 use of any part of the scriptures. Real spiritual at-  
 tainments will make persons more sensible of the ne-  
 cessity and usefulness of every part of scripture, and  
 especially of the songs of it. Whatever may be the  
 attainments of church members in our times, it is still  
 impiety and blasphemy to represent their gifts, words  
 or compositions, without inspiration, as equal or even  
 comparable to those of the inspired prophets and  
 apostles.

BUT the superiority, meant in the text quoted by  
 the objector, is neither a superiority to the use of the  
 old testament scriptures in the reading or saying there-  
 of, (a superiority which cannot, without absurdity and  
 blasphemy, be ascribed to the most eminent saint on  
 earth) nor a superiority in respect of personal attain-  
 ments in knowledge, holiness, gifts and the like; but it  
 is to be understood merely in respect of office. That  
 this superiority is so to be understood is evident from the  
 scope and connexion of the passage; for in the forego-  
 ing verses our Lord describes John as a prophet; and  
 not only so, but as his harbinger in whom the prophecy  
 of Malachi, *Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,*

\* The duty of christians in singing the praise of God explain-  
 ed, by Mr. Black, pages 41, 42.



was fulfilled : In this respect his ministry excelled that of all the prophets that had gone before him. While they spoke of Christ as not yet come ; John, in his ministry, pointed him out already come. Yet is his ministry, inferior to that of the least minister regularly called and sent according to the order of the new testament church ; whose office it is to declare that Christ hath *finished the work which the Father gave him to do ; that he who was dead is now alive and lives forevermore, and hath the keys of hell and of death.*

SEVERAL judicious commentators give us another view of these words, and by *the least in the kingdom of God* understand Christ himself. Christ might be said to be *least in the kingdom of God*, either because he was so in men's account, or, rather, because he was younger than he and posterior to him in the ministry. Here it may be mentioned, that the Greek word rendered *least* is an adjective in the comparative degree, and signifies *lesser*, and sometimes *younger*, as one of the apostles is called *James the less* ; that is, the younger in respect of James the son of Zebedee. However eminent a prophet John was ; Christ was infinitely greater ; as John testifies concerning Christ and himself. John i. 15. *He that cometh after me, is preferred before me ; for he was before me.*

IF it is still objected to the sense which is here given of this text, that while we understand the word *greater* as respecting *office* the word *least* is still considered as respecting personal qualifications. In answer to this it may be observed that it is necessary to consider the words that are opposed to one another in similar phrases as respecting different things. Thus in Mat. xx. 16. *The last shall be first.* The last in men's account shall be the first in God's. 1 Cor. iii. 18. *If any man among you, seemeth to be wise in this world let him become a fool, that is wise in the world's estimation a fool in his own.* So it is most agreeable to the scope and connexion of the place, in which JOHN is compared not with the saints that had gone before him, as such, but with the prophets *with respect to their office*, and also it is most agreeable to the analogy of faith, to understand *the least in the*

*kingdom of God* of a minister of the new testament dispensation, whom the Lord hath called and sent to the ministry, who though he be in his own account, and in that of others, the *least* qualified for that important trust, is yet in respect of his office as being sent to proclaim Christ's humiliation-work already *finished*, superior to JOHN the BAPTIST, who was sent to declare it as only *begun*\*.

IN a word, the greater the light and usefulness of a gospel ministry, church members will be still farther from thinking themselves above the use of the songs or any other part of scripture, because that light will be poured on the church from all the books of the old and new testament, and from the book of psalms as well as from any other.

#### SECT. IX. Of the Old Testament being still a Rule of Faith and Practice.

IT is undoubtedly the doctrine of the old and new testaments, that they are both the rule of our faith and practice; and that, in point of authority and obligation, there is no difference between them: 1. Because the whole scripture is represented as such a rule to us, 2 Timothy iii, 16. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable to us for doctrine; for reproof for correction, and instruction in righteousness.* Surely the old testament could not answer these ends, unless it were a rule of faith and practice to us. 2. Because, in the new testament, we are frequently referred to the old as the rule of faith and practice, Luke xvi. 29. *They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.* 2 Pet. i. 19. *We have a more sure word of prophecy to which ye do well that ye take heed, as to a light shining in a dark place.* 3. Because Christ and his apostles continually appealed to the scriptures of the old testament as the rule and warrant of their doctrine and practice. John v. 39, 46. *Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me. For had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me: for*

\* Willius's Oeconomy of the Covenant's, book iv. chap. 13.

*he wrote of me. Acts xviii. 28. He mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures, that Jesus was Christ. Rom. iv, 24. It was not written for his sake alone,—but for us also. If the old testament were not a rule of faith and practice to us under the new testament, the Bereans would not have been commended for examining the doctrine of the apostles by it. Acts xvii. ii. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily whether these things were so. 4. The new testament, instead of abrogating, confirms and establishes the authority of the old, declaring its perpetuity, Matth. v. 18. For verily, I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled:—and representing the church as built upon the old testament as well as upon the new, Ephes. ii. 20. Ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.*

**OBJECTION.** We have what is sufficient to salvation in the new testament.

**ANSWER.** This expression is ambiguous: for, if, by being sufficient to salvation, be meant that the Holy Spirit may, in a way of sovereignty, bless an outward mean, and make effectual to salvation; in that sense, all that is necessary is in the five books of Moses. But if by sufficiency be meant a sufficient rule of all that measure of faith and practice which God has declared he will have his church brought to, and which, in that case, it is criminal and pernicious to neglect; we maintain that, in this sense, the new testament, without the old, is not sufficient. The new testament, continually proceeding upon and referring to the old, could not be well understood without it. Some matters of faith and practice are revealed in the old testament alone, as the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil by which the covenant of works was broken, and the degrees of kindred within which marriage is forbidden. Some things are far more fully revealed in the old testament, as the creation and the variety of great and precious promises which God hath given us.

OBJECTION. " If we hold the old testament to be a perpetual rule of faith and practice, then we ought to observe the ceremonial law of Moses\*."

ANSWER. This will by no means follow ; because these laws obtained their end fully in the coming of Christ ; the ceremonial being a shadow of him that was to come ; and the judicial being designed to preserve the genealogies and distinctions of families, till the promise made to David, that he whom he believed in as his Lord should, in due time, be his son, should be fulfilled ; and then they ceased of course. They were then abrogated by the old testament itself. Accordingly in the epistle to the Hebrews, the proofs of the abrogation of the ceremonial law are brought from the old testament itself : see, among other places, Heb. viii. 13. xii. 27. Yea the abrogation of them is distinctly foretold in the old testament. Jer. iii. 16. And it shall come to pass in those days, saith the Lord, that they shall say no more the ark of the covenant of the Lord ; neither shall it come to mind, neither shall they remember it, neither shall they visit it, neither shall that be done any more. Deut. ix. 27. And he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.

SINCE the old testament is our rule as well as the new, we are bound to imitate an approved example of the observation of any ordinance of God's worship, which is not ceremonial, though it be found in the old testament only. And therefore unless the singing of the book of psalms could be shewn to be a ceremonial institution, (which cannot be shewn) we are bound to imitate the example of it recorded in the old testament.

SECT. X. Whether the words of the psalms justly and literally translated be of divine authority ? or whether they exhibit the form as well as the matter of the inspired psalms.

IT has been said, " that there neither is nor can be any such thing as the *inspired forms* of the psalms in

\* An examination, &c. page 7.



“ our language, unless an immediate revelation were  
 “ made in that language : that it is not possible to re-  
 “ tain the words and phrases of the original in any  
 “ translation ; that as a prophet is to speak in the lan-  
 “ guage which is suggested to him, his words are just-  
 “ ly called the words of the Holy Ghost ; but that  
 “ whenever a translation of that subject is made into  
 “ any other language, the words of the language into  
 “ which it is translated, are no more the words of the  
 “ Holy Ghost, than Greek is English\*.”

ANSWER. There is a manifest want of candour here. It is true, a word is commonly used for a sound or combination of sounds peculiar to this or the other language. But the objector could hardly be ignorant, that *dabar* in Hebrew, *ρημα* and *λογος* in Greek, or *word* in English is used for the thing enunciated, the particular sound that is employed not being considered. Thus, when it is said, *the words of the pure are pleasant words*, no body supposes there is any reference here to the particular sounds of one language more than to those of another. Thus *terminus vocalis*, in logic, signifies an idea enunciated or expressed, without any consideration of the particular sounds made use of in expressing it. So in universal grammar, as well as in that of a particular language, authors treat of words, of their classes, and of syntax or construction. See Harris's *Hermes*, and Ward's *Philosophy of Grammar*. Nor is any body at a loss to understand the distinction between a translation which professes to give us the sense only, and another, in which it is endeavoured, as much as possible, to give the words of the original. Horace says of a writer,

Serpit humi, tutus nimium, timidusque procellæ.

THE sense is expressed in the following lines of Roscommon.

Some tim'rous wretches start at every blast,  
 And fearing tempests, dare not leave the shore.

\* An examination, &c. pages 21, 22.

THESE two lines are elegant ; but do not give us the words of Horace, who says, " He creeps along the ground, too cautious and fearful of the storm." This verbal manner, it is owned, is awkward and unnecessary in translating the classics ; because the translator, having a competent understanding of the subject, may often express what is meant as well in his own way as in that of his author. But the case of translating the sacred scriptures is infinitely different. There every word is divine. Therefore the translator is not at liberty to alter a single word, or the relation in which it stands to those which go before or follow it. His whole business is to find out the word of the language into which he translates, which, in signification, most exactly corresponds with the Hebrew or Greek word ; and to represent, with the same exactness, the relation in which it stands to those which attend it.

THE fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh sections of the second number of the appendix to the discourse on singing psalms, served farther to ascertain what was meant by adhering to the form as well as the matter of the psalms : namely, that a translator of them ought not to alter the form of discourse ; that he should not turn a prayer, for example, into an affirmation ; that he should not alter the arrangement ; that each verse should be connected with no other matter in the translation than it is connected with in the original ; that no verses or members of verses should be left out\*.

\* These things seem to be allowed by the author of the examination to belong to the form of a psalm : for by this form, says he in the 36th page of his sermon, *I mean the phrases chosen to express the sense, manner and order of arranging the words and sentences.* The writer of the discourse on singing psalms, is sorry, that these words of the sermon now mentioned, had escaped his memory in transcribing that discourse for the press. But it must be obvious to every reader that the omission could not be designed : since the author of the examination, though he puts the most malevolent construction upon it, allows that the writer of the discourse " nearly copies his definition." That writer had, therefore, no inducement to omit it, as his own was so agreeable to it. With respect to the measure of the verse ; since, abstractly considered, it is but mere sound ; since it is far from being

It is allowed, that the form of any part of sacred scripture, can never be so perfect in any translation, as in the standard of all the translations of scripture, the original Hebrew of the old testament and Greek of the new. And hence the absurdity of putting the Septuagint, the vulgar Latin or any other upon a level with the Hebrew and Greek originals. But still it remains a truth, that, so far as the words of any translation are, in signification and arrangement, exactly parallel to those of the original Hebrew or Greek, not only the matter, but the form is divine: the words are as really the words of the Holy Ghost as the Hebrew or Greek words; and that the contrary opinion is a most dangerous error. This doctrine is established by such considerations as the following:

I. THE words of the translations which we have in the new testament of passages of the old, are called *the words of the prophets*, or, what is equivalent, *the sayings of the Holy spirit*. John xii. 38. *That the saying or word of Isaias the prophet, might be fulfilled, which he said, Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Acts xv. 15, 16. *And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written, after this I will return, &c.* Heb. iii. 7. *Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice.* The apostle afterwards calls our attention to the words *To day*, which is one word in the original, as the very word or expression of the Holy Ghost, v. 13. Another instance is remarkable in the twelfth chapter of the same book: *Now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, ONCE MORE signifieth the removing of those things which are shaken as of things that are made.* Thus the translated

certain that there is any measurement of syllables in the Hebrew psalms, but what is similar to that conciseness and correspondence of the members of verses which appear in our prose translation of them; since nearly the same words, and arrangement of them, may be retained in different sorts of verse; he must be very inconsiderate indeed, who is induced to believe that we have not the inspired forms of the psalms, on account of the measure of the verse.

passages of the old testament, in the new, are called the words of the prophets and of the Holy Spirit who spoke by them: and this warrants us to call the translated psalms the words of David and of the Holy Spirit who spoke by him. We speak with sufficient accuracy, when we speak with the scripture.

2. THERE is in the words of scripture, exactly translated into any language, a divine propriety or fitness to express the things of the Spirit of God: which it would be blasphemy to ascribe to any other words, and which fully evidences them to be the words of the Holy Ghost; the very words which his infinite wisdom pitched upon for expressing the truth contained in them. This may be illustrated by an example. When I read these words of the apostle, *He hath made him who knew no sin, to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*; I believe, that, by these words, I am taught, that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us for our justification, as our sin was imputed to him, that he might make satisfaction for it to the justice of God. This is my poor imperfect way of expressing what is undoubtedly contained in the text. But the text itself expresses this and other truths contained in it with infinitely greater propriety. To this purpose Dr. Owen in the eighth chapter of his discourse on the causes, ways and means of understanding the mind of God revealed in his word, has these words. *The principal matter of scripture is mysterious, and the mysteries of it are laid up therein by God himself, and that in a way inimitable by the skill or wisdom of men. When we speak of or express the same things according to our measure of comprehension; wherein from its agreement with the scripture what we say is materially divine, yet our words are not so: nor is there the same respect to the things themselves as the expressions of scripture have, which are formally divine.* To the same purpose Witfius in his *Miscellanea Sacra*, says, “The whole aim of our comments on scripture should be, not to exchange the words of the Lord for our words, as if we foolishly thought our words better than his; but merely to manifest the wisdom of the divine manner of expression.



“ While we are unable to attain that, let us confess  
 “ our unskilfulness and ignorance of the sacred speech.  
 “ For unless we would utterly overthrow the divine au-  
 “ thority of the sacred scriptures, we must firmly main-  
 “ tain, that the words thereof are the words of God,  
 “ But to ascribe any impropriety to the words of  
 “ God, which may need our correction, is downright  
 “ profanity and horrid blasphemy.” So speaks a writer  
 as remarkable for candour as for genius and learning.

3. IT is as necessary to distinguish between the words of scripture and the doctrines which men deduce from them, as the sense of them. For example, from John vi. 34. *No man can come unto me, except the Father who hath sent me, draw him.* These who hold Calvinist doctrine teach that no one who partakes of the least degree of *that sort* of grace which is here called *drawing* can fall short of saving faith, true holiness and everlasting salvation. Arminians, on the other hand, maintain, that many who partake of *the same sort* of grace shall, in the issue perish; the saving effect of it being hindered by man's free-will. How are we to proceed in judging of these opposite doctrines? Why, in the first place, though the sense of the former of these propositions be a divine truth contained in the text, we must allow that neither the words of the former nor those of the latter are, like the words of the text, of divine authority. In the next place, in order to attain the knowledge of the true sense of the text, it is necessary to consider what is most agreeable to the emphasis of the words, to the context, and to other places of scripture on the same subject. In the whole inquiry, we proceed upon the supposition that the words of the text are formally divine; and, in that respect, altogether different from the words that we make use of to express what we apprehend to be the sense of the text. If christians who are unacquainted with the original languages have not the words of the Holy Ghost; if they have nothing but the sense of translators, then have they no standard by which to judge of doctrines: they may, indeed, judge whether one human sense, or interpretation be

agreeable to another : but they know not whether any of them be agreeable to an infallible standard ; because, upon this supposition, they have no such standard, there being no other than *the words* of the Holy Spirit in the scriptures. Thus, those who do not understand the original languages are incapacitated for exercising any judgment of discretion about the doctrines they hear, or for distinguishing between truth and error. Nor will it be much better even with those that understand those languages. For it is hardly possible for the best scholar, who has been accustomed to think in a modern language, to judge any otherwise of a text than according to his own translation : and then, it seems, he judges as little according to the words of the Holy Spirit, as the unlearned do. Thus the benefit of revelation is reduced to nothing. We must even take up with our own wisdom or reason, as the only rule to direct us in judging what is truth, or what is error. What is called revelation may indeed, upon this supposition, supply reason with more materials to work upon, which the writings of Plato and Cicero may also do : it supplies a number of doctrines or notions ; but no sure foundation to rest upon in believing any of them : for nothing can be such but *the words* of the Holy Spirit in the scripture, which, translate them into what language you please, still manifest themselves to be *his own words*, and constitute one common infallible standard, by which the unlearned, as well as the learned, may distinguish the truth from the most plausible errors which the wit of man or the craft of Satan can devise.

4. THE formal reason of saving faith, or of that persuasion which the Lord works in the hearts of sinners, that such is the truth of a particular doctrine, that it affords a solid rest for eternity, is just this, that the words, in which it is delivered to us, are the words of God who cannot lie. Hence that representation of saving faith in the first epistle to the Thessa. ii. 13. *When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.* Hence faith is represented as *our hearing the voice*

*of the son of God, and the setting to our seal that God is true.* Hence the continual repetition of *Thus saith the Lord, or the Lord hath spoken.* Hereby we are taught that no words can be the foundation of a divine faith but such as are formally the words of God. "The mind of God," says Dr. Owen, "being now committed to writing, God is to be regarded by every individual of mankind to whom the scripture is come, as speaking to him no less immediately than if he heard his voice, as Adam said he heard it in the garden. Though this voice could not strike the human ear but by means of the air in which it is formed; yet this does not render it improper to say, that it was a voice immediately from God. So the Lord in his word, notwithstanding the mean of writing which he makes use of in transmitting it, may well be considered as speaking to us by an immediate voice. Abraham did not doubt that it was, indeed, the voice of God which gave the probatory command about sacrificing his son, and therefore without hesitation he set himself to obey it. So the authority of God speaking in the scriptures, the voice therein being apprehended with irresistible evidence to be the voice of God, is found to be the highest obligation to faith and obedience."

THE Doctor, in another part of his *Theologoumena*, expresses himself to this effect: "He who applies himself to the study of the holy scriptures, should, in the first place, have it deeply fixed in his mind, that, while he is reading and meditating on this word, he is, in a peculiar sense, near to a Holy God, that, being possessed with a due reverence of the divine majesty and authority, he may carry himself as becomes a poor sinner, with self-abasement and submission of heart. For, in the holy scriptures, God speaks to the reader no less immediately, than if he spoke by a voice from heaven. He is despised when holy reverence and godly fear do not possess the mind of the reader. He dwells with those alone who tremble at his word. A light and desultory manner of reading the scrip-

“ tures is the plague of men’s souls and the door of “ Atheism.”

5. IN the saving manifestations that God has made of himself to men by means of the scripture, they have had the clearest views of the words of it being the very words of God. When the Lord is pleased to shine on their souls in the reading of the scriptures, do they not discern something divine in the energy of the words, in the order and disposition of them, and in the richness and suitableness of the metaphors and similes? Do they not find one thing following another in a manner so suitable to their case, and to what is manifestly the design of the Holy Spirit in the place, as fills them with wonder, and convinces them that the very manner of the scriptures is as much superior to the manner of mere human composition, as the fabric of the universe is to that of any work of human art? Some conviction of this may be attained by such a diligent attention to and rational consideration of the language and manner of the scriptures as man’s natural understanding is capable of: this conviction is sufficient to vindicate the peculiar experience of true believers in this matter from the charge of enthusiasm: though it must be allowed to fall as far short of a divine faith, and to be as far different from the saving experience of the people of God, as the pleasure of seeing the picture of a man whom we peculiarly esteem, is different from that of seeing and conversing with the man himself.

THOUGH all true believers have a deep and abiding sense of the power and authority attending the words of the Holy Spirit, by which they are distinguished from all other words: yet there are various degrees of this experience in different believers; and in the same believer at different times. On some occasions it has been very remarkable and astonishing. Junius gives this account of his conversion. While he was yet thoughtless of the concerns of his soul, it came, one day, into his mind to read something in the scriptures. He opened the book at the first chapter of the gospel of John. He read; he was astonished; his mind was filled with an overpowering sense of the divinity of



the matter, and of the majesty and authority of the words. During the remainder of the day, says he, I could think of nothing else. Bishop Burnet tells us he had the following account from the mouth of the earl of Rochester. "When Mr. Pearsons was reading to him "the fifty third chapter of Isaiah, he felt an inward "force upon him, which did so enlighten his mind and "convince him, that he could resist it no longer: for "the *words had an authority* which did shoot like rays "or beams in his mind. So that he was not only convinced by the reasoning which satisfied his understanding; but by a power which did so effectually constrain him, that he did ever after as firmly believe in "his Saviour, as if he had seen him in the clouds. He "had made it be read to him so often, that he had got "it by heart. He would descant upon particular expressions in this manner: Who hath believed our report? Here, said he, was foretold the opposition the "gospel was to meet with from such wretches as I was, "&c."

THE pious and judicious Mr. Haliburton, in his memoirs, observes "That though God make use of the "words of men for leading into the meaning of his own; "yet it is *the very words of scripture* by which he conveys his influence into the heart; and that when he "found the word had done good, it was usually *God's "own word in the scripture* brought in in his sermons." A remark that deserves the particular attention of ministers.

6. THE forms of speaking, such as exhortation, declaration, prayer; the order and connexion of verses; the metaphors, in an exact verbal translation of the scriptures, are either of divine inspiration, or they are not. If these be not of divine inspiration in such a translation, then are they not so even in the original text; because it is undeniable that they are precisely the same in both. And if these be not of divine inspiration, then is the bible, as we have it in the original languages, not so. For surely whoever is the author of any composition is the author of the manner of speaking used in it; the author of the order and connexion of its parts;

of the metaphors and similies. And if God is not the author of the scriptures, then have we no divine revelation.

ON the other hand, if the forms of speaking, the order and connexion of the verses, the metaphors and similies be of a divine inspiration: then, since these belong to the form of the scriptures, so far as these are accurately preserved in any translation, so far the form of what is thus translated, is divinely inspired. In this respect, it cannot be denied, that the scripture songs, thus translated, may justly be called inspired songs, in opposition to pretended imitations of them, in which the particulars now mentioned are manifestly neglected.

WE may argue in the same manner with respect to the words of scripture in general; that they are either the words of the Holy Spirit in an exact verbal translation, or they are not so in the original text: for if the *nouns* in the translation signify the same *things* with those in the original, and be in the same *subjective* or *objective* cases; if the *verbs* signify the same *state of doing* or *suffering*; if the same *connections* or *qualifications* of the nouns and verbs, be signified by the *adverbs* and *conjunctions*; then, so far as this identity has place, setting aside the difference of mere sound, the words are precisely the same in the translation that they are in the original; and the former just as much inspired words as the latter.

WHEN we speak of the order of words being the same in a translation as in the original, what is meant in the order of them, according to the structure of language in general: and not according to the collocation or arrangement of words, which, in particular languages, may be used for the sake of versification, or may have become customary for the sake of the more agreeable pronunciation. Thus when one says in English, *The good hate to sin from the love of virtue*; and in Latin, *Oderunt peccare boni, virtutis amore*; it is manifest that the order of words, according to the general construction of language, is, in both sentences, one and the same: this is obvious to common sense; and it might be demonstrated by the rules of universal grammar; or

by a logical resolution of each sentence into its *subject*, its *predicate* and *copula*. But were one to say, *Sin is hated by good men from the love of virtue*, the order of the words would then be changed, though the sense would be the same.

As to the Hebrew and Greek idioms, or peculiar phrases, each of them may be considered as a complex term, and generally a phrase may be found in English as exactly answerable to it in signification, as one single word is to another. Such idiomatic expressions as cannot be verbally rendered are so rarely to be met with in scripture, that it will be hard to find any translation of a Latin or Greek book so literal as our translation of the scriptures; and competent judges allow, (what indeed, in some measure, appears from the valuable readings in the margin) that it might have been more so with advantage. Mr. Thomas Boston, who was a great adept in Hebrew literature; agrees with Mr. Addison, That the Hebrew idioms run into the English tongue with a particular grace and beauty; that they give a force and energy to our expression, warm and animate our language, and convey our thoughts in more ardent and intense phrases than any that are to be met with in our own tongue.

THE account which critics give of the beauties of the style and composition of the scriptures is applicable to a literal translation of them, as well as to the original. "The expression," says Henry Stephens in his excellent preface to Marlorate's Ecclesiastical exposition of the psalms, "the expression which we have in Deut. "xxviii. 28. The heaven which is over thy head shall "be brass, and the earth that is under thee, shall be iron, "is an instance, among many, of a style or manner of "speaking, *formula sermonis*, peculiar to the Hebrews, "and altogether their own. Go now, turn over all the "Greek and Latin poets, the heroic, the tragic, the ly- "ric, the Dithyrambic: Will you ever find any thing "like this in them? Any words so significant, so em- "phatical, so full of majesty? But why should we won- "der that far other words proceed from sacred lips,

“ than those of profane authors ?” And a great deal more to the same purpose.

OBJECTION. “ The inspired writers of the new testament frequently translate portions of the Hebrew scripture into the Greek language ; but, in doing so, they neither observe the *order* of the original always, nor give a literal translation. To be convinced of this, compare the following passages : Matt. ii. 18. with Jerem. xxxi. 15.—Luke iii. 4, 5, 6. with Isai. xl. 3, 4, 5.—Luke iv. 18, 19. with Isai. lxi. 1, 2.—Matt. iv. 15, 16. with Isai. ix. 1, 2.—Matt. xii. 18, 19, 20, 21. with Isai. xlii. 1, 2, 3, 4.—Mark vii. 6, 7. with Isai. xxix. 13.—Matt. xxi. 5. with Zechar. ix. 9.—Matt. xxi. 16. with Psal. viii. 2.—Matt. xxvii. 9, 10. with Zechar. xi. 13.—Acts ii. 25, 26, 27, 28. with Psal. xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11.—Acts iii. 22, 23. with Deut. xviii. 15, 18, 19.—Acts vii. 42, 43. with Amos v. 25, 26, 27\*.”

ANSWER. If the variations in these passages are brought to prove that a translation of the old testament ought not to adhere to the words and phraseology of the old testament, then the objector’s reasoning must be to this effect : The writers of the new testament in quoting a passage occasionally and for a particular purpose, out of the old testament, do not retain some words of the original that were not necessary to that purpose : therefore, such as are not quoting but translating, and who have no other warrantable purpose than that of rendering all the words of the old testament, ought not to retain some of these words in their translation. It is manifest, there is no consequence here. In quoting a passage from any author, we may use as many or as few of his words as our purpose requires : nor is any injury hereby done to the author, provided only that due care be taken to use his words in a manner not disagreeable to his intention. The design of a quotation is to connect some part of an author’s words and sense with the sentiments or discourse of him that makes it : the design of a translation is singly to represent the

\* An examination, &c. page 23.



whole words and sense of the work or passage which is the subject of it. When it is connected with any other purpose than that of the author, it ceases to be an example of simple translation.

WE allow, that the paraphrases or explications which the Holy Spirit in the scripture hath given us of his own words, are of equal authority with the words of which they are explications. But this is God's prerogative. A translator may no more put his own glosses and explications in place of the words of God, than he may lay claim to unerring wisdom and divine authority. Many of these variations are such as serve to explain the original words of the old testament. Thus in Isai. lxi. 1. *To bind up the broken hearted* is rendered in Luke iv. 18. *To heal the broken hearted*: and the last clause of that verse in Isaiah, *The opening of the prison to them that are bound*, is explained and amplified in the words of Luke, *The recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised*. So what is in Isai. xxix. 13. *Their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men*; is explained in Matt. xv. 3. *In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*. The expressions in Isai. xlii. 1, 2. *My servant whom I uphold: he shall not cry,—and he shall bring forth judgment unto truth*, are in Matt. xii. 18, 19, 20. *My servant whom I have chosen: He shall not strive nor cry, until he send forth judgment unto victory*. What is in Psal. lxvii. 18. *Thou hast received gifts for men*, is in Eph. iv. 8. *Gave gifts unto men*. So instead of *beyond Damascus* in Amos v. 27. Stephen in Acts vii. 43. has, by way of explanation, *beyond Babylon*. It is to be observed with respect to these explicatory variations in general, that they are not so much a departure from the original words, as an expressing what is included in the emphasis of them, as has been shewn by many learned writers. It is also to be observed that there is hardly one of these passages of which the greater part is not an exact translation of the Hebrew words.

AGAIN, when the sacred writers of the new testament give us a passage of the old, they do not always give an entire sentence, but often only some words of

one which, in their genuine sense, are applicable to the matter in hand. Of this what is cited in Matt. iv. 15, 16. from Isai. ix. 1, 2. is an example. *The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali—by the way of the sea beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. The people, &c.* The Evangelist omits the words in the beginning of the first verse; and the words between *Naphtali* and *by the way*. Thus in Matt. xxi. 5. the words of Zech. ix. 9. *Just and having salvation*, are left out.

SOMETIMES a sentence is made up of two or more quotations from the old testament. Thus in Matt. xxi. 5. the former part of the verse, *Say ye to the daughter of Zion*, is taken from Isai. lxii. 11. and the latter part from Zechar. ix, 9. So in Rom. ix. 33. *Behold I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and rock of offence, and whosoever believeth shall not be ashamed*: the beginning and end are taken from Isai. xxviii. 16. and the middle part from Isai. viii. 14.

SOMETIMES we find the same text cited in several places of the new testament; and, in each of these places, some part of it is more particularly applied, according to the subject and scope of the sacred writer. This is the case with that remarkable text in Isai. vi. 9, 10. In Acts xxviii. it is adduced to convince the Jews of their obduracy in rejecting the word of the gospel: and therefore the words of Isaiah are used only so far as they described their character: *Go unto this people and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive; for the heart of this people is waxed gross, &c.* But, in the 12th chapter of John, the scope is to represent the spiritual judgment the Jews were under from God as what accounted for their unbelief: and therefore the words of Isaiah are used, so far as they represent the holy and righteous hand that God had in the matter; *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, &c.*

THUS the words of the old testament are truly recited in the quotations from it in the new: but only such and so many of them, in any particular quotation, as were necessary to the scope or design of the place where

it is made. These examples rather shew us how we should quote, apply and compare passages, than how we should make a simple and adequate translation.

UPON the whole, it is evident, that, in a translation, in which the metaphors and similies, the words, not as to sound, but as to use and signification, together with the order and method of composition, are endeavoured as much as possible, to be retained, we have in a great measure, though not in such perfection as in the original Hebrew and Greek text, the inspired form of the scripture songs; and every part of that form is divine; intitled to reverence and godly fear. Hence it has been justly regarded by christians in general as grossly profane to use the words or peculiar phrases of scripture in a ludicrous manner. Hence, too, our ancestors testified against reading any of the apocryphal books, in the public services of the church: because though many of the same truths may be found in these books, that are taught in scripture; yet there is an infinite difference between any human compositions and the scriptures: and the giving the former the same place in public worship with the latter was undoubtedly a grievous corruption.

ONE thing more may be observed, which shews that this objection of our opponents is but a vain pretence, namely, that all the rest of their reasons for preferring the use of other compositions in our public and solemn praises, to the book of psalms, would militate against the singing of these psalms in the original Hebrew, supposing we were to sing in that language, fully as much as they do against the singing of them in a translation: for they are not more founded upon or connected with the peculiarities of the Jews, nor are they more obscured by allusions to these peculiarities, in a translation, than they are in the original. Therefore, their reasons plainly imply a preference of the words of mere human compositions for the purpose of singing in solemn worship, to what themselves allow to be the words of the Holy Ghost: therefore, we do them no injustice, when we charge them with such a preference.

SECT. XI. Of the question, Whether the Singing of the Book of Psalms be abrogated.

IT has been objected, "that the singing of many parts of the book of psalms is abrogated." If we would know what are these parts; the objector answers, *That the scripture songs were not designed to be a system to the christian church; nor to be any otherwise used in her psalmody, than as the matter of any of them is suited to the christian dispensation.* If it be farther asked, How we are to determine what parts are not suited to the christian dispensation? he gives us two answers: one is "That they are parts of the psalms that are so founded upon and connected with the ceremonial institutions that they can have neither being nor meaning beyond the institutions themselves; particularly, those which declare that these institutions still exist; and in singing of which, the worshippers affirm that they will practise agreeably to them as in these words, *I will offer bullocks with goats.*" The other answer is, "That the late Synod hath given its approbation to a version of psalms which superseded the necessity of an *expurgatory index.*" The objector calls Dr. Watts's imitation a version by a *Catachresis or Abuse of names*: Recte dicimus Abusionem, says Quintilian, quæ non habentibus nomen suum accommodat quod in proximo est\*. But surely Dr. Watts's performance could not be ranked among the *non habentia nomen suum*: since the Doctor had expressly told us, that what he designed was not a translation; but an imitation.

THE parts of David's psalms the singing of which is abrogated being thus ascertained, it is proper to hear the reasons. The first is, "that it is impossible to sing them because it is impossible to retain the form of the inspired psalms in any language but that in which they were originally dictated: and impossibilities are not obligatory." This, one should think, might be suf-

\* This figure is rightly used, when a thing has no proper name, and we give it the name of what stands in the nearest relation to it.



ficient : but it is necessary to dissuade blind mortals from attempting impossibilities ; and therefore the objector gives two reasons more.

THE second is, “ The obligation to any practice  
“ continues so long as the reason, on which it is found-  
“ ed, continues ; and ceases when that reason ceases to  
“ exist. Nothing can be more evident than that many  
“ parts of the psalms are founded upon, and so connect-  
“ ed with the ceremonial institutions that they cannot  
“ have being nor meaning beyond the institutions them-  
“ selves.”

THE third reason, “ That a practice is abrogated,  
“ when persons under the influence of divine inspiration  
“ introduce other modes and forms of worship in the  
“ room of it. For Paul informs us ( 1 Corinth. xiv. )  
“ that persons were in the first age of christianity di-  
“ vinely inspired to dictate psalms to christian worship-  
“ pers : the singing of which newly dictated psalms  
“ came in place of the singing of David’s psalms, ac-  
“ cording to the practice of the old testament ; as the  
“ observation of the first day of the week came in place  
“ of the observation of the seventh\*.”

ANSWER. It may be observed, that, among the numerous verses of the original psalms omitted in the imitation of Dr. Watts, there are many so far from being founded on the ceremonial institutions, that they do not so much as allude to them. For example the first twelve verses of the xvii. psalm, and the first six verses of the lxxxvi. One has but to open the book for instances of this kind. So that either the objector’s principle must be inadequate, that is, there must be some other reasons, besides this, for reckoning the singing of so great a part of the book of psalms abrogated ; or the expurgatory index which, we are told, the late Synod and the present General Assembly of the Presbyterian church of the United States of America, has given us, must be very erroneous and calculated to mislead the inattentive, filling their minds with fears and apprehensions of mere ceremonial worship, where, according to

\* An examination, &c. pages 15, 16, 67.

the objector's principle, there seems to be no danger. Yet there may be more danger than one is aware of: for, in the first place, if a person should venture, upon the footing of the objector's principle, to sing some of the verses that are extruded by the assembly's index, he would be chargeable with a breach of church-order: and then who knows how soon we may see a *serid* speech about the obscurity of the old testament, and the superior attainments of the present generation; attainments, which old testament psalms are, it seems, utterly unfit (and indeed, there is too much reason to fear the truth of it with respect to some of the religious attainments boasted of at this day) to express; about the necessity of the common people's acquiescence in the judgment of Dr. Watts, Mr. Barlow, and the general assembly, as to what parts of the book of psalms ought or ought not to be retained in their psalmody; and, lastly, about the endless impertinence of inquiring after the reasons why these men have been pleased to let slide such particular verses and parts of verses from being sung in public worship.

BUT let us consider the objector's reasons for his opinion, that the singing of some of the psalms, or of some parts of some of them, is *abrogated* under the new testament dispensation. The first is, "That the singing of them is impossible, because it is utterly impossible to retain the form of the inspired psalms in any other language than that in which they were originally dictated."

This appears at first view to be a strange paradox, or rather a glaring falshood, namely, that it is impossible to do what the church has actually been doing for more than seventeen hundred years past. It puts one in mind of the philosopher who affected to display his acuteness by proving that there is no such thing as motion, and who, as Diogenes sufficiently confuted by walking through the room. It has been shewn, that this impossibility of retaining in a translation the form of the inspired psalms is but a vain pretence. It is true, that the observance of the ceremonial and judicial laws is now impracticable. But is that which renders them im-

practicable any way parallel to what is pretended by the objector to make the singing of the psalms so? Is it as impossible to translate the psalms so as to preserve, in some measure, the same form that they have in the original; as it is now for the Jews dispersed all over the world to repair three times a year to Jerusalem, or to ascertain the tribe and family to which every individual belongs? It is well known that there is hardly a book in any foreign language, which is, in general, so easy to be translated, even word for word, or which, in this sort of translation, loses so little of its original form, as the bible.

THE objector's second reason proceeds wholly upon the supposition that we must consider the words we sing in divine worship as our own words, and as applicable to our present case and circumstances, the absurdity of which was shewn in the first section of this chapter. It is necessary to distinguish between David's forming of this resolution *I will offer bullocks with goats*, and the church's singing it in her solemn worship.

It is allowed, that David's end in forming such a resolution must have included in it the practice of the ceremonial law. But the church's end in singing it is the instruction arising from David's example: "Such passages of the psalms," to use the words of Mr. Hervey in the vi. dialogue of his *Theron and Aspasio*, "suppose the persons whom they describe to be convinced of their natural corruption, to be humbled under a sense of their actual guilt, and to live in the conscientious observance of the expiatory sacrifices; all which had an invariable reference to Christ, and derived their whole virtue from his mediation. By such sentiments and such a conduct, they reduced to practice the very essence of gospel-doctrine; disavowing their own deeds however virtuous or religious; and trusting in the strength of Israel, the Lord our righteousness, who was the substance of every purifying and of every propitiatory rite."

SUPPOSING this to be the real import, as it undoubtedly was, of such passages, and supposing the instruction and further edification of worshippers in faith, holiness

and comfort, to be the end of the Holy Spirit in recording, and the end of the church in singing them, surely the obligation arising from this end to the singing of them is as great as it ever was ; that is, church-members have as much need to sing them for their instruction and further edification, as ever.

WITH respect to the third reason, it proceeds upon the supposition, that the singing of the psalms of the old testament is as inconsistent with the singing of those that are suitable to the new testament dispensation, as the observation of the seventh day sabbath is with that of the first day ; that is, it takes for granted, That the old testament psalms are quite unsuitable to, and inconsistent with the due observation of some new testament ordinance ; which is, in reality, the matter in question ; the very thing denied. As to the passage in 1 Cor. xiv. it may be examined afterward.

BUT supposing other songs had been given to the church under the new testament dispensation, it does not necessarily follow, that the singing of the book of psalms would have been abrogated : these other songs might have been, like what is called the song of Mary in the first chapter of Luke, so much in the manner of the book of psalms, as to be rather a recommendation of the singing of that sacred book. Several of the Protestant churches sing other hymns : but the notion of the abrogation of the singing of any part of the psalms was never heard of in them : just as the church of Rome has added apocryphal books to the canon of scripture, without rejecting such as truly belong to that canon.

A CANDID reasoner will never require his opponent to prove a negative : and it would be a very absurd way of managing the controversy with the Jews, to insist, that they ought to prove that the ceremonial law is not abrogated. However, it may not be improper to add some things, serving to shew what a new and strange doctrine is now broached about the abrogation of the singing of the psalms in the old testament.

IT is a great presumption against this pretended abrogation of the singing of the book of psalms in christian worship, that the new testament church has observed the



singing of these psalms as a divine ordinance, and church members have enjoyed sweet communion with God therein, for upwards of seventeen hundred years past—without the least appearance of a scriptural testimony against it. We allow, that, for some time after the death of Christ, the practice of some of the ceremonial usages was indifferent, that is, it was neither duty by any law in force enjoining it, nor sin from any law prohibiting it.

BUT it may be observed, that there is no evidence that, after the death of Christ, these ceremonial usages were ever allowed in the public worship of any christian assembly, as the singing of the book of psalms has constantly been used. What was indifferent appears from the xiv. chapter of the epistle to the Romans, to have been such as the observation of certain meats and days by some individuals in their personal unconnected capacity, not as members of the church. Hence the apostle speaks of what one did, and another neglected, in his single state, just as it pleased him, verse 2, 3, 5, 6. From this it follows, that these legal rites, as obtaining in the church to which this epistle is directed, no way affected the system of new testament ordinances. They neither corrupted the whole, nor set aside, or altered any part of them. They made no part of the worship of the church, nor were in the least connected with it\*. Again, these usages were no more indifferent, after the abrogation of the ceremonial law was fully manifested by the destruction of the temple, and the ruin of the whole political and ecclesiastical state of typical Israel. Till that time, the Lord was willing to bear with the weak prejudices of professing christians. After it, the signification of his pleasure was complete:

\* See this more fully illustrated in Mr. Ramsey's Review. The Relief Scheme Considered, by this worthy author, explains, with much accuracy, the nature of church-communion, and rescues this xiv. chap. of the epistle to the Romans and many other passages of scripture, which the advocates for Latitudinarian schemes attempt to press into their service. It well deserves the attentive perusal of christians, particularly of professed Presbyterians.

and the practice of these ceremonial rites became sinful, and no longer an object of christian forbearance. From the resurrection of Christ till that time, they had been dying; but now they became deadly. So that, if the singing of the book of psalms was one of these abrogated rites; then it must now be a most ceremonial and pernicious practice: and can we suppose that if it were so, the whole church of Christ could have persisted in it upwards of seventeen hundred years, without discovering any proper sense of the sinfulness of it, but rather accounting it a divine ordinance of distinguished importance, necessity and advantage? How comes it that the abrogation of the singing of the book of psalms was never, till now, heard of in the christian church? How could the church, under the clear shining of new testament light and with the guidance of the spirit of truth, who, according to Christ's promise, has all along remained in the church until this day, be so long entangled in such a gross error, as that of mistaking a mere abrogated ceremonial rite for moral worship? Is not this without a parallel or example in the history of the christian church?

EVERY mention of the psalms or reference to them in the old or new testament seems clearly to be against the notion of this pretended abrogation. It is observable that the psalms themselves represent the singers thereof as singing a new song on account of the calling of the Gentiles under the new testament dispensation, Psal. xcviii. 1, 2. *O sing unto the Lord a new song. The Lord hath made known his salvation, his right hand hath been openly shewn in the sight of the heathen.* Here we are taught, that, in the book of psalms, there are songs adapted to new occasions; adapted to what was to take place under the new testament dispensation.

It is remarkable, that the collection of psalms which we have in the old testament is not only called *the book of psalms*, Luke xx. 42. Acts i. 20. but also *the psalms*, Luke xxiv. 44. and, on occasion of a reference to a particular passage, *the second psalm*, Acts xiii. 33. and *another psalm*, ver. 35. intimating that they are still to be known and acknowledged by the church, as they had

been under the old testament, to be *the psalms*, that is, the system of songs to be used by the church in her solemn worship.

FURTHER, that the singing of the book of psalms was none of those things which were abrogated, when the the new testament dispensation took place, may be argued from the nature of it. Whatever was abrogated, upon the commencement of that dispensation, belonged either to the judicial or ceremonial law. But the singing of the book of psalms belonged neither to the one nor to the other. It did not belong to the judicial law; because that prescribed the civil policy and government of the Israelites, and not matters of religious worship. Nor did it belong to the ceremonial law; because it wants the characters of what was a duty merely by virtue of that law.

FOR, in the first place, *the things themselves* that were enjoined by the ceremonial law, abstracting from what they prefigured, were carnal and unprofitable. The shedding the blood of beasts, the burning of flour and incense, the distinction of meats and drinks; these rites, *in their own nature*, are of no religious or spiritual use. Hence the ceremonial law is said to consist of *carnal ordinances imposed on the Israelites till the time of reformation*. But it would be no less than horrible impiety to speak in this manner of the singing of the scripture songs. Surely the reading of the word of God is, *in its own nature*, a spiritual and profitable exercise: and the singing of such parts of that word as God has appointed to be sung, is an exercise which, *in its own nature*, could not be less profitable or spiritual, than the reading of it. There is not one of the psalms, but the singing of it, according to its true scope and meaning, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, or instruction in righteousness: these being the purposes for which all the parts of scripture, and more especially the songs of it are, *in their own nature*, profitable. But nothing that peculiarly belonged to the ceremonial law, and was to be abolished, was, *in its own nature*, spiritual or profitable to the soul.

IN the next place, the numerous and minute observances of the ceremonial law were, *in themselves, or abstracting from their figurative use*, a heavy burden; a yoke, says Peter, *which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear*. Acts xv. 10. that is, considered in themselves, and without that prefiguration of Christ which had then ceased. But surely neither the reading nor the singing of the word of God, which is the delight of his people, and their song in the house of their pilgrimage, could ever in itself be to them such a yoke or burden.

IN a word, the warrant for reading the whole scriptures, and the warrant for singing the psalms thereof go together; nor will the one cease to be a duty, till the other cease to be so also.

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### CH A P. III.

*Shewing that no other than the Scripture-songs ought to be sung in the solemn worship of the church.*

IN the discourse on singing psalms, this proposition namely, *That the scripture-songs are the only forms of psalmody that ought to be used in the public and solemn worship of the church*, was offered, and defended by some arguments: which we shall now review in order, and consider the exceptions that occur.

#### ARGUMENT FIRST.

WE argued, in the first place, from the silence of scripture, with respect to the use of any other than the scripture-songs in the ordinary solemn worship of the church. We have seen that there is a divine appointment of the book of psalms to be sung in that worship; but in vain do we look into any book, either of the



old or new testament, for such a divine appointment of uninspired hymns.

SOME passages, however, have been adduced, as countenancing the practice of singing such hymns in solemn worship. One of these passages, which has been much insisted on, is Col. iii. 16. *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord:* compared with Eph. v. 19. *Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.*

WITH respect to the three names here given to such compositions as are proper to be sung, namely, *psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs*, it may be observed, in the first place, that there is no reason to infer from these names that any part of the book of psalms is unfit to be sung in the solemn worship of the new testament church, or that it is not a sufficient system for that worship. There might be some pretence for such an inference, if the apostle had mentioned a sort of songs quite different from any that are to be found in the book of psalms. But there are many of each of the sorts here mentioned in that book: as to the name of *psalms* there can be no dispute. There can be as little about the propriety of calling the psalms *hymns*. The book is called *Seppher Tehillim*, a book of praises or hymns. Many of them are eminently hymns or songs of praise, such as the 145th and following psalms. As to the name of *songs*, it is found in the titles of the psalms: and the Greek word here used by the apostle is the same which is used by the Septuagint in rendering these titles. And they may well be called spiritual songs, whether we consider the author of them, the Holy Spirit, the subject of them, namely, what respects the case of the soul, or the use of them, which is to promote our spiritual good.

HENCE it appears very strange how the author of a sermon on the duty of Christians in singing praise to God\*, could assert, that *there are no authentic records, sa-*

*ated or profane, which prove that the psalms of David bore these various titles ; since these are the very titles which accompany the psalms ; and the Greek words which are rendered psalms, hymns and songs, are all found in the Septuagint translation of the titles of the psalms.*

OBJECTION. “ Our songs of praise should be composed of the matter which the new testament reveals, because the apostle exhorts us to teach and to admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs from the rich indwelling of the word of Christ, a phrase which has a peculiar reference to the new testament\*.”

ANSWER. We have already seen, that the church has no new matter to sing of in the new testament, which it had not before in the old. The christian religion is not a new religion broached by Christ and his apostles. “ The old testament,” as one justly observes, “ implies and contains the new ; and the new is but the “ explanation and confirmation of the old.” Even the word of Christ in the new testament dwelling in believers richly and in spiritual wisdom, far from prejudicing them against the singing of the psalms, hymns and spiritual songs in the old testament, will cause them to prize them more highly, and to sing them more judiciously, and with more spiritual profit and delight. Nay, this spiritual wisdom, attending the inhabitation of the word of Christ in believers, will discern such divine excellencies in the very frame and texture of the scripture-songs, as nothing in the frame or texture of a mere human composition is once to be compared with.

BUT why must this phrase, the word of Christ, in this particular text, be understood as having a peculiar reference to the new testament ? Not, surely, because the phrase in itself, is such as it would be improper to apply to the whole scriptures. It is a certain evidence of the divinity of Christ, that the word, contained in the scriptures of the old and new testaments, is his word : it is properly called his word, 1. Because it

\* Examination, &c. page 6.

was dictated by his spirit; for the spirit that was in the prophets was *the Spirit of Christ*, 1 Pet. i. 11. 2. Because Christ is the great subject and scope of the scriptures, John v. 39. *They are they which testify of me.* The phrase may sometimes be limited by the words that accompany it, as in Mark viii. 38. *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me or of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, &c.* where it must necessarily be understood of such words, doctrines or commands of Christ, as church members in that generation were in danger of being ashamed of. It is obvious, that this might be the case with some of them; more especially, Rev. iii. 8. *Thou hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name:* where it is evident, that the word of Christ was something that church-members in Philadelphia were under a temptation to deny, which might be either his whole word, or some particular part of it. In these, or any other texts, if the word of Christ is not taken for the whole word of God contained in the scriptures of the old and new testament, the reason is, not that there is any impropriety in calling the whole the word of Christ, but because something in the connexion renders it necessary to understand it in a more limited sense: in which connexion the limitation would have been the same, supposing the word had been called the word of God. But in the text under consideration, there is nothing in the words that accompany this phrase to hinder us from understanding it of the old testament as well as the new: for, surely, it is our duty to have the old testament dwelling in us richly, as the psalmist had it, Psal. cxix. 11. *Thy word have I hid in my heart:* ver. 98. *Thy commandments are ever with me:* ver. 93. *I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.* By the old testament as well as by the new we may attain spiritual wisdom, not only to our own salvation, but to our usefulness in teaching and admonishing one another, Psal. cxix. 99, 100. *I have more understanding than all my teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients; because I keep thy precepts.* And as to psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, the old testament is a store-house wherein they are laid up

by infinite wisdom in rich variety. Thus, there is nothing in this text against the singing of the old testament psalms in our solemn worship.

BUT, in the second place ; we have no warrant in this text for singing any other psalms and hymns and spiritual songs than those which we have in the scripture. It is a good rule for the understanding of scripture, that what is wanting in one place is supplied by another. We are here taught by the apostle, that we are to sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. But if it be further inquired, whether the psalms, hymns and spiritual songs we are to sing in solemn worship, be such as are of human composition or such as are contained in scripture : we have a sufficient answer in the Lord's giving us a body of them expressly bearing these very denominations ; as has been shewn, and also in the divinely recorded and approved example of his church ; which, as hath been shewn, is not an example of what was to be abrogated at the commencement of the new testament dispensation, but of what is to continue till the end of time. With regard to what we are to sing in solemn worship, nothing more can be required by this text, than that we sing what comes fully up to the import of these three names, psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs ; and that we adhere to the more particular direction which the Lord hath given us in other parts of his word. But we do so, when we sing the scripture songs. Therefore, the conscience has a solid ground of satisfaction in the singing of them, as the whole of what is here enjoined with respect to the form of psalmody to be used in solemn worship\*.

\* The author of the examination, &c. page 8. intimates that the writer of the discourse on the divine ordinance of singing psalms, should have proved, *that the scripture-songs are here meant exclusively* : whereas it was certainly sufficient to the purpose of that discourse, to shew the futility of the reasons that are pretended to be derived from this text for the singing of human compositions in solemn worship. It has been proved, by comparing with this other places of scripture, that the psalms, hymns and songs which are appointed to be sung in public and solemn worship are to be understood of those only or exclusively,



WE now proceed to the consideration of another text adduced by such as plead for the singing of human compositions in our solemn worship, which is, 1 Corinth. xiv. 26. *How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation.*

IN the preceding verses of this chapter, the apostle treats of the extraordinary gifts with which the Corinthian church was so abundantly furnished. He reproves them for their undue preference of the gift of tongues, of which, it appears, they were very ostentatious. He shews them the folly of using that gift so as to hinder the church from being edified by other gifts, particularly, by that of prophesying. From the 26th verse to the end of the chapter, the apostle shews how all those gifts might have a place in the public administrations, and be exercised to the general edification. In this verse we have an enumeration of these extraordinary gifts. The expostulatory form of this enumeration seems to imply a reproof of the Corinthians, not only for their disorder, but for the vanity of the pretensions of many among them to these gifts. Hence the apostle, in a following verse, directs, that, *while two or three prophesy, the others should judge.*

WE may observe, with respect to the gifts here enumerated, that most of them are included in that of prophesying. That *revelation* and *interpretation* were included in it, will not be doubted, when we consider that it

which are found bearing these titles in the sacred scriptures. But if it be meant, that we should prove by this text alone, or without considering it in connexion with what is taught in other places of scripture, that human compositions are not to be used in the solemn worship of the church, the requisition is as unreasonable as it would be to require us to disprove by this text alone, or without considering it in connexion with what is taught in other places of scripture, the assertion of some, that all church members, according to their gifts or ability, are like warranted or authorised to *teach and admonish publicly* : for according to the punctuation of the accurate Bengelius and others, the text stand thus : *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,—in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another,—in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

was the office of the prophets in the times of the apostles, to interpret by an extraordinary gift of the spirit, the prophecies of the old testament, and to shew their exact agreement with those things that were taught by the apostles and evangelists. The apostles, indeed, were prophets of the most eminent rank; but there were some prophets who were not apostles. Thus, it is said of Judas and Silas, that, being prophets, they exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them, Acts xv. 32\*. "The gift of prophecy," says Voetius, a "man, whom the judicious Dr. Owen calls *πολιμαθειτα-  
τος*, ob raram eruditionem; pietatem singularem, ac  
"veritatis amorem nunquam satis laudandus, the gift of  
"prophecy may be said sometimes to coincide with the  
"gift of wisdom, sometimes to differ from it, as the  
"whole from a part. For to some was given prophecy,  
"by which they might dextrously interpret and judi-  
"ciously apply theological or doctrinal matters only, 1  
"Corinth. xiv. in preaching, in conference and disputa-  
"tion, in prayers and hymns, v. 3, 4, 25, 31. And  
"this coincides with wisdom and knowledge; and, in v.  
"26 is distinctly pointed out by the synonymous terms of  
"a psalm and a doctrine. To others was given prophe-  
"cy, by which they might not only do what is now  
"mentioned, but also know and foretel hidden and fu-  
"ture things by divine revelations and visions†." It  
has been justly observed by Witfiers and others, that the  
gift of prophecy is represented in scripture as exercise in  
singing the divine praises. Of this we have a remarka-  
ble instance in 1 Sam. x. 5, 6, when Samuel says to Saul:  
*When thou art come to the city thou shalt meet a company of pro-  
phets, coming down from the high place, with a psaltery, and a  
tabret and a harp before them, and they shall prophecy; that*  
is, they shall utter such songs of praise as were imme-  
diately suggested by the holy spirit. The denomina-  
tion of prophecy was not given to every song on a reli-  
gious or sacred subject; but to those only that were ut-  
tered under an extraordinary and immediate agency of

\* Witfius miscel. sacr. de prophetis.

† Voetii disputat. de signis et charismatis.

the Holy Spirit ; as is intimated in the following words of Samuel to Saul. *And the spirit of the Lord shall come, or, as it is in the margin of some bibles, shall break, upon thee, and thou shalt prophecy with them.* Witius thinks, that those who presided in this company of prophets, began an extraordinary afflatus of the spirit to sing some sacred hymn, and that the rest partaking of the same spirit, followed with their voices and instruments. For, in this case, their minds were in unison, like the strings of several musical instruments equally wound up ; so that one of them was no sooner touched by the spirit of God than the rest answered in the same tone, thus making the sweetest harmony imaginable.

THE psalm which the prophets in the Corinthian church are here said to have, was either one of the old testament psalms, which the Holy Spirit directed them to sing, as peculiarly adapted to the purpose of administering that correction or instruction which the case of the church at that time required : or some other song which was immediately suggested to them by the Holy Spirit, and which they were immediately directed to deliver with such modulations of the voice as are called singing.

IT is to be observed, in the first place, that this was not dictating a psalm to be sung by the church in her ordinary solemn worship : for this singing was no other than the prophesying mentioned in the first book of Samuel already referred to : in which none joined but the company of the prophets, or such as were under immediate inspiration. Nay, according to Tertullian's account of the remains of this gift in his time, only one seems to have sung at once. *Post aquam manualem et lumina, ut quisque de scripturis sanctis vel de propria ingenio potest, provocatur in medium Deo canere : i. e.* "After water  
"for their hands and lights were brought, every one"  
(not of the whole congregation surely, but of such as were esteemed to be, in some measure, possess of the gift of prophesying) "is called upon to sing publicly to God  
"either out of the holy scriptures, or from his own  
"gift." We have no ground to suppose that any of these songs, thus delivered, were ever used by the church

in her ordinary solemn worship. It is one thing, to have a new psalm to be sung by the prophet himself in the exercise of his extraordinary gift: another thing, to have a new psalm to be dictated to the whole church in order to be sung in her ordinary solemn worship. That the new testament prophets might have new psalms for the former purpose, is allowed; but that they had any for the latter purpose, is denied.

In the next place, we observe, that the circumstance of the prophets or persons endowed with extraordinary gifts having uttered psalms, which are not contained in the holy scriptures, will not warrant others who are destitute of such gifts, to dictate psalms for our ordinary solemn worship; for it is a maxim absolutely necessary to the right understanding of the scriptures, that what is recorded in any place of scripture to have been done by virtue of an extraordinary gift is, when taken singly or by itself, no proper warrant for any thing in our ordinary worship or practice; nor is at all to be imitated, except we have a warrant for it in some other place of scripture. Unless this is allowed, we may pretend a warrant for the greatest extravagancies; we may pretend, for example, to imitate Jeremiah in hiding his girdle in the hole of a rock, or Ezekiel in eating a roll, or book. Unless we adhere to this maxim, the plea of quakers and other enthusiasts, from the exercises described in this chapter, must be admitted, to the utter subversion of the institution of a gospel-ministry. But if this maxim be adhered to, then we will find nothing in the text under consideration to justify the dictating of psalms for the ordinary solemn worship of the church, by any man destitute of the extraordinary gifts of which the apostle is here treating: for it cannot be denied, that the having or uttering a psalm, in the text, was by virtue of an extraordinary and miraculous gift. But if it be alleged, that our warrant to imitate the exercise of that gift, in this circumstance, is in some other place of scripture; then the warrant for it in this place is given up: the thing, which in that case, is presupposed, being the very thing in question.



OBJECTION. " We cannot, indeed, reason from the  
 " existence of this spiritual gift in the first ages of chris-  
 " tianity, to the existence of it now. From the necessi-  
 " ty of it then we cannot infer that it is necessary now.  
 " Nevertheless, the duty performed by the help of this  
 " gift, which was then but not now necessary, is in eve-  
 " ry respect of a common and ordinary nature\*."

ANSWER. As the gift itself was, so were the peculiar  
 acts of it : if the former is not necessary now, neither  
 are the latter ; for the gift was for the sake of the pecu-  
 liar acts of it. That the having or uttering a psalm in  
 the way of prophesying is by virtue of an extraordinary  
 gift, is not denied. That it is a peculiar act of that  
 gift, can as little be denied, unless it could be shewn from  
 some other place of scripture, that it might proceed  
 from another cause ; and then the proof would be from  
 that other place, not from this.

THE objector says, the duty performed by the help  
 of this gift, is, in every respect, of a common and or-  
 dinary nature. But how knows the objector, that it is  
 so ? Not from any thing said in this text. If it had  
 been said, that a psalm was dictated to be sung in the  
 ordinary solemn worship of the Corinthians ; if it had  
 been the act not of prophets, or extraordinary officers,  
 but of the ordinary pastors of the church in the ordinary  
 exercise of their office ; if these things had been plainly  
 expressed, or deducible from what is expressed by neces-  
 sary consequence, there would have been reason to look  
 upon it as an example of an ordinary duty. But the  
 matter is far otherwise. We have no more reason from  
 any thing in the text to consider this *having* or uttering  
 a psalm, in the way of prophecy, as a common and or-  
 dinary duty, than we have to consider *the having a reve-*  
*lation* in that light. Both evidently arise from the ex-  
 traordinary gifts belonging peculiarly to an extraordin-  
 ary office, which has long ago ceased in the church. It  
 is true, some of the particulars here mentioned are al-  
 lowed to be ordinary duties of the pastors of the church,  
 as *the having a doctrine or an interpretation*. And we do  
 not deny that some ordinary duties may be performed in

\* An examination, &c. page 71.

the exercise of an extraordinary gift. But surely we never could have known them to be ordinary duties from the account of that exercise. So if we could not prove doctrine and interpretation to be ordinary duties of the pastoral office, from other places of scripture and from the nature of the thing, we could not warrantably conclude them to be such from their being here represented as exercises of the extraordinary gift of prophesying. Supposing, then, (what from all we know of the matter cannot be granted) that these prophets had dictated psalms for the ordinary worship of the church : yet since it cannot be pretended, that, in the true meaning of this text taken by itself, this dictating of psalms is represented as an ordinary duty, it is plain, there is nothing here to prove that it is such a duty. For, to suppose that other places of scripture, or the nature of the exercise, evidence it to be such a duty, is to suppose the very thing for which the objector adduces this text : If it appears to be an ordinary duty from other texts, or from the nature of the exercise, the proof is in those texts or in the nature of the exercise ; not in this text : the arguing from it is a mere begging of the question.

OBJECTION. “ What is it that was of an extraordinary nature in the case referred to ? Was it the exercise of singing praise ? No, this is an ordinary duty. Was it the matter of their songs ? No, this was such as was suited to the gospel dispensation then existing ; and therefore, such as will be suitable to it, as long as it shall continue. The only extraordinary thing in the case under consideration, is the spiritual gift or extraordinary manner in which they were furnished with their songs of praise.\*”

ANSWER. Here the objector distinguishes between what is ordinary and what is extraordinary. But what he says can make nothing for his purpose ; unless he means, that the dictating of psalms to be sung in the solemn worship of the church, belongs to the ordinary duty of the church. This he does not pretend to find in

\* An examination, &c. page 70.

the text, though it was the very thing he meant to prove by it. So that hereby, according to him, in order to prove by the text, that the dictating of psalms for the solemn worship of the church is an ordinary duty, we must first allow upon some other grounds that it is an ordinary duty; that is, the text will prove the point, if the point itself be already allowed upon other grounds.

As to the distinction itself, it is readily granted. We are agreed as to singing being an ordinary duty of the church; and also, that the matter sung should be suited to the gospel dispensation to the end of the world. Nor would there have been much objection to the proper use of these words, "that the only extraordinary thing in the case was *the extraordinary manner in which,*" as he supposes, "the church was furnished with songs of praise;" which extraordinary manner was not an extraordinary gift; for the gift by which the church was furnished with songs, must be distinguished from the manner in which it was furnished with them. The manner in which the church was furnished with songs, according to the objector, was by the prophets dictating them: and the manner he allows, or seems to allow to be extraordinary. But we cannot agree to his supposition, that the songs which the prophets are here said to *have* or *sing*, were those with which the church was then furnished for her ordinary solemn worship: 1. Because this singing appears to have been altogether peculiar to the prophets, like that in 1 Sam. x. 2. Because we have no proof that ever a song dictated by a new testament-prophet was actually sung in the ordinary worship of the christian church. 3. Because if they had been sung, they would have been preserved and committed to writing. Nay, it is hardly conceivable, how they could otherwise have been used in ordinary social worship. Such songs as were dictated by the extraordinary gift of prophesying, were given by inspiration: and if they had been committed to writing for the use of the church in her ordinary worship, they could not have been distinguished from what belonged to the canon of scripture. This proposition, therefore, of the objector is groundless.

OBJECTION. " Alldivine discoveries, when first made, were such as had not been known or in use before. Therefore, because they were once new, and discovered, too, in an extraordinary manner—by immediate inspiration, must we conclude that they are not to be of common use, and as a standing directory. We must, then, throw aside all divine revelation. The matter of the first christian songs, then, though communicated in an extraordinary way, was not of a temporary nature. It was such as the new testament, afterwards compleated, contains at large ; and which is designed for ordinary use in praising, praying and preaching to the end of time.\*"

ANSWER. This peculiar exercise was said in the Discourse on Singing Psalms to be extraordinary, not because the divine will concerning it was newly revealed at that time ; or because it was communicated in an extraordinary way or by inspiration ; but because this exercise was revealed as peculiar to persons of such a description, namely, prophets or persons endowed with those extraordinary gifts, which were to cease with or soon after the apostolic age. It would be a ridiculous conclusion, indeed, that the scripture-revelations are not of common use, or to be regarded as a standing directory, because they were once new and delivered in an extraordinary way : But who can see what this conclusion has to do with our asserting, that a particular practice, being the exercise of an extraordinary gift, was to cease with the gift itself ; and that the recording of the practice, like the recording of other miracles, may be useful and necessary for the church, till the end of time, though the practice itself be limited to a particular period ? As to the chief matter of the christian's song, namely, the mystery of redemption through the blood of Christ, it was communicated in the first gospel promise, and is not far from being as old as the creation.

WE conclude, that no man, who pretends to make psalms for the solemn worship of the church, can, with any colour of reason, attempt to justify his pretension by

\* An examination, &c. page 70.



the prophets being said in this text to have a psalm, while he is destitute of the extraordinary gifts here treated of; and also, that there is nothing in this text that countenances the singing, in our solemn worship, of any psalms or hymns whatever, which are not found in the sacred scriptures.

It is said in the discourse on Singing Psalms, that there is no hint in scripture of the use or necessity of set forms of prayer; nor a single approved example of singing in ordinary social worship, in which it can be proved that any other words were used than those of the inspired songs.

OBJECTION. "The writer of that discourse must have forgotten, that Christ taught his disciples a set form of prayer, as John had taught his disciples before: Now, whether we believe this prayer to be designed as a form, to which they were to confine themselves, or only as a pattern according to which, in general, they were to pray; still we must conclude it was useful; otherwise we must believe that Christ did an useless thing. And I leave it to the candid and rational reflection of every one, whether, if a man were really desirous of praying in his family, and were so disqualified for the duty, at first, as to utter absurdities, and give pain, instead of edification, to those who joined with him; whether, I say, it would not be useful and expedient for such a one to use a form, until, by the divine blessing on the use of means, he would become better qualified for free prayer."\*

ANSWER. When the use of set forms was mentioned in the discourse on the singing of psalms, what the writer meant (and what seems to be commonly meant by that expression) is the practice of reading or repeating the words of a previously prescribed form in the actual performance of the duty of prayer. Such an use of set forms does not appear to have been taught either by John or by Christ. It has been shewn abundantly by presbyterian writers, that our Lord's design, in giving that form which is commonly called, *the Lord's prayer*,

\* An examination, &c. page 38.

was not to prescribe so many words or syllables in which we should pray; but to teach us for what sort of things and in what manner we should pray. Our Lord no more prescribed a form of words for prayer, in the expression, *Say ye, Our father, &c.* than he prescribed a form of words for preaching, in the following expression, *Go preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand*: Luke's expression, *Say, our father, &c.* is explained by that of Matthew, *After this manner pray ye*. The variations between these two evangelists in the words of this prayer shew that it was not recorded as a prescription of the words in which we should pray. It is also of great weight, that we never find the saints, recorded in scripture, using this or any other prescribed form of words in the actual performance of the duty of prayer: but they are still represented as using such words, as they were led to use from the present occasion and the present exercise of their hearts. The very perfection of the Lord's prayer as a pattern in which all other warrantable prayers are comprehended, is an argument against the use of it as a form of words: because our weakness renders a specifying of particulars and our dwelling sometimes more on one particular, sometimes more on another, necessary to the exercise of prayer. The truth is, there is a remarkable speciality in the use of the Lord's prayer, as a most perfect pattern of prayer; but as to the words and expressions, they are no more sacred, and particularly, are of no more use in prayer, than words or expressions suitable to that exercise, recorded in other places of the sacred scriptures. Nor is the doctrine now advanced any thing against the observation, that it is better to pray by a form than to utter absurdities or to neglect prayer altogether: but we cannot conclude that such a particular manner of performing this duty is to be accounted the right and warrantable manner of performing it, because it is not so bad as the uttering of gross absurdities or the utter neglect of it.

OBJECTION. "As to singing other words than those of the inspired songs, the reader is desired to cast his eye on Luke xix: 37, 38. where we are informed that "when Christ rode into Jerusalem on an ass's colt, the

“ whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise  
 “ God with a loud voice for all the mighty works which  
 “ they had seen, saying, Blessed be the king that cometh in the  
 “ name of the Lord ; peace in heaven, and glory in the high-  
 “ est. Mark in his xi. chap. 9th and 10th verses, re-  
 “ cords some more particulars of this song, thus, *They*  
 “ *cried &c.* This was certainly an act of social wor-  
 “ ship ; yet the words used are different from any in-  
 “ spired song. Again, in Acts iv. 23, 24. Peter, John,  
 “ and their company sung a song of praise, in which  
 “ there is a reference to two verses of the second  
 “ psalm ; and which might teach christians how to form  
 “ their songs. It is well worthy of being analysed.—  
 “ They introduce two verses of David’s psalm ; but  
 “ not in an exact literal translation. And to mention  
 “ no more, John has recorded two songs which should  
 “ serve as a model of christian psalmody to the end of  
 “ the world. Revel. i. 5, 6, and v. 9, 10\*.”

ANSWER. The account we have of the acclamations  
 of the multitude upon our Saviour’s entrance into Jeru-  
 salem, is allowed to be an instance of worship ; but  
 not of that ordinary social worship, which continues in  
 the church, and which was manifestly what the writer of  
 the discourse intended, when he spoke of singing in so-  
 cial worship : This instance of worship appears, in the oc-  
 casion, the place and the manner of it, to be singular and  
 extraordinary. It was on a singular and extraordinary  
 occasion, namely, our Saviour’s entrance into Jerusalem,  
 as foretold by the prophet, Zechar. ix. 9. It was not  
 in an assembly of people come together for the purpose  
 of joining in the exercise of religious worship ; but the  
 religious exercise here described, was altogether sur-  
 prising and unexpected. If there was no example of  
 the singing of an inspired psalm here ; there was as lit-  
 tle an example of singing any other hymn which had  
 been made beforehand. They all spoke, at once, as  
 they were moved by the Holy Spirit : and under his  
 immediate inspiration were their acclamations and their  
 application of the words of the 118 psalm to Christ.

\* Examination, &c. page 38, 29, 105.

BUT it may be enquired, whether there was singing at all on this occasion? The expression, *they praised God with a loud voice*; will not prove that there was. The word *praise* does not necessarily imply singing. When it is said, *Let another praise thee, and not thine own mouth*; there is no necessity to suppose that singing is meant. It is most agreeable to the parallel passages to suppose that they expressed their joy and praise in crying and proclaiming these words, *Hosannah to the son of David, &c.* When the people, upon hearing Herod's oration, gave a great shout, saying, *It is the voice of a God, and not of a man*, they might well be said to praise him with a loud voice. The like remark might be made on the Ephesians, when they all, with one voice, for the space of two hours, cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. Nobody will say there was any singing in either of these cases. In short, no reasonable person will say, that, in the passage under consideration, there is any example of singing, other than the inspired songs in the ordinary solemn worship of the church.

As to the passage in Acts iv. 24, 25, 26, 27. it seems strange that any one should represent as an example of singing what the inspired writer expressly calls prayer, ver. 31. Surely it is not necessary to understand *lifting up the voice* of singing, as is evident from the common use of this phrase in scripture: we need go no further than this book for examples. Acts ii. 14. xiv. 11. xxii. 22. As to the translation of the words of the second psalm, it is the same which we have in the Septuagint, and is undoubtedly an exact literal one. The Greek words which are rendered *gathered together* certainly correspond with the Hebrew verb and adverb. In the verbs, the Hebrew preterites answer to the Greek aorists. They are both often used for the present tense.

As to the passages adduced by the objector from the first and fifth chapters of the Revelation, the singing of literal translations of them, would be a singing of inspired words, which is a quite different thing from the singing of human compositions. It may also justly be doubted, whether these passages be intended to be *forms* of psalmody. The first of them is not called a song, but is



such an ascription of praise as we meet with in many passages of scripture, where it will not be pretended there are forms of psalmody, 1 Tim. i. 17. Jude 24, 25. As to the last of these passages, it is part of a divine allegory, and surely it would be very absurd, to suppose that the form of our worship ought to be according to the grammatical or literal sense of the words of an allegory. The design of this passage is rather to exhibit, in general, the state of the church under the new testament, and what is continually the matter of her triumphant song, than to prescribe in proper words the outward form and order of her worship.

THUS we see how vainly our opponents attempt to find an approved example in scripture of singing any other than the inspired songs, in the ordinary solemn worship of the church.

## ARGUMENT SECOND.

THE second argument against the use of any other than the scripture-psalmody in solemn worship arises from the scripture-system of psalms being of such extent and variety, that it fully answers all the purposes of singing in solemn worship. If some of the psalms be in a very sublime strain, as the xviii. and civ. the strain of others is more plain and simple, as the xxv. the xxxvii. and xli. If many of them respect the case of the church, as the lx, lxxiv, lxxvi. there is a still greater part of them that respect personal cases. So plainly and fully do the psalms of David testify of Christ, that “from them,” says Witfius, “may be learnt the nature of those things which are to be held concerning the offices, states, and benefits.” *Ex iis pleraque intelligi liceat, quæ de ipsius persona, officiis, statibus et beneficiis nenda sunt.* “And a great many passages of the psalms,” adds he, “pertaining to these subjects are frequently in the new testament alleged by Christ and his apostles, not in the way of an elegant allusion, but for the solid proof and confirmation of the doctrines which they delivered\*.” “What is it,” says Basil, “what is it

\* Witfius de prophetis, libr. i. chap. xviii.

“ I pray, which you cannot learn from the psalms ? Do  
 “ they not teach you the most honourable fortitude, the  
 “ most exact justice, a grave temperance, a discerning  
 “ prudence, the right manner of repentance, the rules of  
 “ patience, and every good thing that can be mention-  
 “ ed ? Here is a perfect theology, or system of divine  
 “ knowledge : the declaration of Christ who was to  
 “ come in the flesh, the threatenings of judgment, the  
 “ common hope of a blessed resurrection, the fear of  
 “ punishment, the promise of glory, the revelation of  
 “ mysteries. There are treasures of all things brought  
 “ into, and laid up, in the book of psalms, as in a great  
 “ and common store-house or magazine.”

“ THIS book,” adds Junius and Tremellius, (from whose preface to the Psalms, Proverbs, &c. the words of Basil now recited are taken) “ is an epitome of the  
 “ old testament, a looking-glass of the grace of God,  
 “ a complete anatomy of human nature : it abounds  
 “ with instructions concerning the promises of God,  
 “ concerning his works that are gracious towards his  
 “ own people, severe towards his adversaries, and faith-  
 “ ful towards all ; concerning our faith in his promises ;  
 “ concerning our obedience ; concerning our infirmi-  
 “ ties, patience, constancy, and deliverance in adversity ;  
 “ concerning the right use of benefits and thanksgiving  
 “ in prosperity ; and, in general, concerning the whole  
 “ of our duty towards God, and his faithfulness to-  
 “ wards us in Christ ; of whom the most elegant and  
 “ illustrious prophecies are here every where intersper-  
 “ sed for the consolation of the church.” Luther used  
 to call the psalms his little bible.

SUCH was the judgment of these eminent lights of the church, concerning the book of psalms resulting from a most accurate study of them, and from a solid experience of the use and application of them, in the various trying situations in which the Lord was pleased to exercise their faith and patience.

OBJECTION. “ If the scripture-system of psalmody  
 “ contains all that the discourse on singing psalms af-  
 “ firms, undoubtedly there can be no need of any other  
 “ scripture : it will answer every purpose of doctrine,

“ reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness  
 “ for the perfecting of the man of God\*.”

ANSWER. It is said in the discourse, that there is no article of scripture-doctrine but what is more or less insisted upon: the representation of a doctrine may be sufficient for all the purposes of psalmody, that would not be sufficient for all that instruction of those that are quite ignorant of it, and for all that conviction of those that deny it, which the Holy Spirit designs by more largely insisting upon it in other places of scripture. The concise mention of a doctrine in the psalms does not supersede the necessity of that full explication of it, and of those various lights in which it is placed in the other sacred books. It is possible to have the idea of a poem on the late war so complete, as that not one of the scenes or operations which are described in the histories of Dr. Gordon and Dr. Ramsay would be omitted, but would be dwelt on more or less, as the purposes of poetry might require; yet it would be very ridiculous to say, that such a poem would render the information of these valuable histories useless or unnecessary. On the contrary, as such a poem well written would recommend the study of those histories: so the more concise representation of a doctrine or duty in the psalms, is a mean of exciting us to seek the further instruction concerning it to be found in the other parts of scripture.

OBJECTION. “ The writer of the discourse should  
 “ have descended to particulars, and pointed to places  
 “ where every article of doctrine, spiritual exercise,  
 “ &c. &c. contained in the whole compass of revela-  
 “ tion, is to be found in the scripture psalmody, or  
 “ have produced some text of scripture to support it:  
 “ when he undertakes to do this, I will shew him many  
 “ scripture-doctrines which are not contained in it†.”

ANSWER. When the objector says the scripture psalmody is imperfect, and that some point of christian doctrine or experience which ought to be in our psalmo-

\* An examination, &c. page 77.

† An examination, &c. page 77.

dy, is not to be found in it; it is surely incumbent on him to declare what that point is; and not leave others to form conjectures about what it may be. Enough has been said to shew, in general, that the peculiar doctrine of the gospel about the way of salvation through a Redeemer is contained in the psalms. For particulars we must refer to Calvin, Mollerus, Ainsworth, and other judicious commentators.

THE objector boasts that he will shew many scripture doctrines which are not contained in the scripture psalmody: when he points out any one article of faith concerning the nature and perfections of God, concerning the covenant of grace, or concerning his dealings with his church and people, or their exercise towards him, asserting that it is an article neither contained in the express words of any scripture song, nor deducible therefrom by necessary consequence, his mistake will be easily evinced: but till then, it cannot be done.

OBJECTION. "The new favours received from God should be with us as they were with the Jews of old, continually the subject of new songs, and the very minute circumstances of the present providence should be described in them; their matter, style, and all their ornaments being suited to the present occasion. This paints matters to the life—presents objects as they really are—and consequently gives to expression energy to touch the heart\*."

ANSWER. This exception is proposed and answered in the discourse on singing psalms. It is there observed, that there are no dispensations of providence, but we may find a form of words in some of the scripture songs, suitable to express our sense of the Lord's doing therein. It may be further observed, that the songs which the Jewish church used in her ordinary solemn worship, after the times of David and Solomon, were not such as were newly composed on the occasion on which they were used. In Hezekiah's time, the songs that were used in solemn worship were those of David and Asaph, which had been delivered to the

\* An examination &c. pages 101, 102.



church nearly three hundred years before. It may be added, that the sort of reasoning used in the objection does not go at all to prove that such a scheme of psalmody is warrantable: the import of it is, that it is pity that it is not warrantable, and that people now have not a warrant to make psalms for public worship, as well as Moses, Deborah and David had: for there are many now well qualified for this work: and we judge it to be the best scheme. But, as Bishop Butler, in his analogy, observes with respect to the truth of christianity in general, the only question is, whether it be a real revelation, not, whether it be attended with such advantages as we should have looked for beforehand: for of these, in revelation, as well as in the acknowledged constitution and course of nature, we are incompetent judges; so we may observe with respect to the singing of any other than the scripture songs in our solemn worship, the only question is, whether it be a real institution of Christ; not whether it be agreeable to our preconceived opinions about what is best adapted to the end. We should never forget that man's wisdom, in these matters, is foolishness.

### ARGUMENT THIRD.

THE third argument against singing any other than the scripture songs in solemn worship is to this purpose: that in respect of the qualities of the scripture songs, their infinite excellency forbids any other to be brought into competition with them, or to possess the same place with them in the solemn worship of the church. For,

1. No other songs have the authority of the scripture songs. No other has the Holy Spirit given forth under the form and designation of his songs. They alone bear the stamp of, *Thus saith the Lord*. Of some other poems on divine subjects, it may be said, that they are agreeable to the word of God, and serve to illustrate some truths contained in it, but it can be said of none but the scripture songs, that they are formally his word.

2. No other have the majesty of the scripture-songs. What is said in Psal. xxix. 4. *The voice of the Lord is full of majesty*; is undoubtedly applicable to his voice in his word. This majesty of the word arises from the wonderful greatness and sublimity of the things set forth in the name of God, and in words chosen by himself to express these things.

3. THE words of scripture have a pregnancy and fulness of meaning, which is not to be expected in any other words. Though the sense of scripture is always but one determinate sense, yet it is so large and comprehensive, that, though the weakest christian may come to know, that such an opinion is not contained in such a particular text; and that another doctrine, reproof or instruction is truly contained in it: yet is there a proficient in scriptural knowledge who will venture to say that he has learned all that is to be learned even from a text that is accounted one of the plainest? hence other songs must be very insipid to a person of spiritual discernment, when they are compared with the scripture songs.

4. No other songs can justly be accounted so pure and holy, so absolutely faultless, so free from all the effects of human vanity, as the scripture songs. Prov. xxx. 5. *Every word of God is pure.* Psal. xii. 6. *The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth purified seven times.* This purity makes the Lord's people prefer the scripture songs unspeakably to all others. Psal. cxix. 140. *Thy word is very pure; therefore thy servant loveth it.*

5. No other songs are comparable to the scripture songs in point of efficacy: for *the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart*.

As these properties are manifest in the scriptures in general, we may expect to find them more especially so in the songs of it.

HENCE it is evident, that the scripture songs are adapted to the use of the church in her solemn wor-

ship in such a manner as no other songs are or can be.

## ARGUMENT FOURTH.

THE last argument against the introduction of any other than the scripture songs into the solemn worship of the church is taken from the native tendency of their introduction.

OBJECTION. "The arguing against the new psalmody from consequences, is like that of the church of Rome against the reading of the scriptures by the common people: namely, that they would pervert them, and dangerous consequences would follow. What one thing is there which we must not give up, if the possible bad consequences following from it be a sufficient reason for setting it aside\*?"

ANSWER. Our divines have often shewn in the most convincing manner the falsehood of this allegation of the Papists. They shewed, that the reading of the scriptures, instead of tending to the seduction of the people, was the only mean of preserving or delivering them from it; they shewed that misapprehensions of the meaning of scripture, instead of being caused, are removed by the serious reading of it accompanied with prayer. They shewed, that the hearing of the word, which the Papists allowed, was as much liable to abuse from men's corrupt dispositions, as the reading of it. It is always unjust to charge any sentiment or practice with consequences that are only accidental; that may or may not attend it. But if they be consequences that are of the same nature with that sentiment or practice; if, by a fair deduction, they can be shewn to follow from its very nature; the imputation of them is every way reasonable. It is even no more than a necessary explication of such a practice or sentiment: it is only warning people whither they are going, when they follow it. Therefore the tendency of the scheme of singing human compositions in the solemn worship of the church,

\* An examination, &c. page 86.

instead of the scripture-songs, ought to be carefully examined.

1. THIS scheme, then, cannot be vindicated from a tendency to the disparagement of the scripture-songs. This is particularly the case with the book of psalms, when it is represented as proper for the worship of the Jewish church, not for ours. It will be vain to say, it is only for singing that it is improper; for it is a book given to us under the title of a book of psalms or songs: and what shall we think of a book of songs that are improper to be sung? And what views can we have of the mercy, wisdom and faithfulness of God in giving us such a book; a book under that particular denomination?

2. THIS scheme cannot be vindicated from a tendency to gross error about the old testament dispensation, Here we are not left to draw inferences. This is done to our hand by one who tells us, that it was his business to establish principles; the principles upon which this scheme proceeds. According to him, it is one of these principles, "That what we have written in the old testament, as well as what we have in the new, was not dictated to be a perpetual rule to the church of God on earth." Which is directly contrary to the doctrine taught, agreeably to the holy scriptures, in the second question of our shorter catechism: "The word of God (which is contained in the scriptures of the old and new testament) is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him." Another principle of this scheme is, "That the medium through which mercy and grace are communicated; and how the communication thereof is consistent with the other divine attributes and government, appears to be the discovery of the new testament;" that is, it was not discovered at all in the old: "that the old testament does not lead us to God through Christ; nor teach us to regard Christ as the only Mediator between God and man; or to rely on his obedience and death as a satisfaction to justice in the stead of the sinner, and the only ground of his access to and acceptance with God."



ALL which is contrary to the doctrine taught, agreeably to the holy scriptures, in our confession, of faith, chapter vii. sect. 5. "The covenant of  
 " grace was administered under the law by promises,  
 " prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb,  
 " and other types and ordinances, delivered to the peo-  
 " ple of the Jews, all which fore-signify Christ to come,  
 " and were, for that time, sufficient and efficacious,  
 " through the operation of the spirit, to instruct and  
 " build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah, by  
 " whom they had full remission of sins, and eternal sal-  
 " vation." And sect. 6th. "There are not two co-  
 " venants of grace differing in substance; but one and  
 " the same under various dispensations." Here we are  
 taught, that the elect, under the old testament, had  
 faith in the promised Messiah: consequently, they knew  
 the medium through which mercy was communicated to  
 them; for surely the knowledge of Christ essentially be-  
 longed to their faith in him. Christ was revealed to  
 them by their prophecies and types; for by these they  
 were instructed in the faith of the promised messiah.  
 In a word, the gospel of the old testament was for sub-  
 stance, that is, as to all the articles of it, one and the  
 same under the old testament that it is now under the  
 new: the same covenant of grace, which includes the  
 whole gospel, being administered under both dispensa-  
 tions; and the difference between them being wholly  
 and only in the manner of administering that covenant.  
 The same truth is taught in that form of sound words,  
 the Heidleberg catechism. Question xviii. "Who is  
 " that Mediator, who is, at the same, the true God and  
 " true and perfectly righteous man? Answer. Our Lord  
 " Jesus Christ, who is made of God unto us wisdom,  
 " righteousness, sanctification and redemption." Ques-  
 tion xix, "How know you that? Answer. From the  
 " gospel; which God first revealed in paradise, and af-  
 " terwards propagated by the patriarchs and prophets;  
 " shadowed forth by the sacrifices and other ceremonies  
 " of the law; and at last accomplished by his only be-  
 " gotten son." "It is beyond all controversy," says

the Confession\* of the Elector Frederic iii. Count Palatine of the Rhine, "that all the patriarchs and the  
 "godly in the old testament, when they offered their  
 "lambs and other beasts, comforted themselves by faith  
 "with this, that the seed of the woman, who is our  
 "Lord Jesus Christ, should, in like manner, be slain,  
 "and so make full and perfect satisfaction for sin." From these quotations it appears, that the principle of the advocates for the new psalmody, with respect to the old testament dispensation, is a new and strange doctrine in the Protestant churches. The tendency of this doctrine of has been shewn in another place†.

3. THIS scheme cannot be vindicated from a tendency to Deism. In support of this scheme we have been taught, "that the words of the scriptures in a  
 "translation, are no more the words of the Holy Ghost  
 "or the inspired form of Scripture, than English is  
 "Hebrew or Greek;" that is, not all. Consequently, such as read the scriptures in a translation have none of the words, nothing of the form of that revelation which God hath given us. Now this is the very thing which a Deist denies that we have. He will allow, that whatever truth is in the book we call the Bible, ought to be believed; and he professes to have as much regard to whatever truth he can find in this and other books as any man. What constitutes Deism is not properly the denial of the truths contained in the scriptures; but the denial of the communication of these truths, in the words of an immediate revelation from God, or in the words of the Holy Spirit. If it be said, that the worst that can be made of the scheme in question is, that it denies the divinity of the form of the scriptures, as exhibited in a translation. We answer, that this is bad enough, as it deprives more than ninety nine hundredth parts of professing christians of divine revelation as such, making it no better to them, in point of authority, than the writings of Xenophon or Plato: for it is our duty to receive the truths contained in

\* In the *Syntagma Confessionum*.

† Chap. II. Sect. 4th.

them; because they are truths. And our duty with respect to the bible, when divested of its inspired form, (which lies in the words of it being the very words of God) can be no more. But this is not all: for the form of the bible which we have in our translation, and which the new scheme denies to have been given by inspiration, and accordingly treats as a thing which there is no harm in changing or diminishing at men's pleasure, and as a thing to be received only so far as is thought proper or suitable, includes in it the particular sort of discourse that is employed, the connexion the metaphors and similes, which cannot be denied to be the same in a just translation that they are in the original: whoever is the author of the original, is the author of these: so that when the abettors of the new scheme of psalmody represent these particulars (which undoubtedly belong to the form of the scriptures) as not given by inspiration; they deny that the original was given by inspiration; or that we have any divine revelation at all. Many of the abettors of the new scheme of psalmody, it is allowed, have no such thought: but nothing is more common than for persons to be blind to the nature and tendency of the snare in which they are entangled.

4. THIS scheme, being itself an instance of will-worship or superstition, cannot be vindicated from a tendency to the increase of it. The pretence to find any warrant for the making of hymns by ordinary church members for the ordinary solemn worship of the church, in scripture, particularly in Col. iii. 16—in 1 Corinth. xiv. 26—in Acts iv. 24—in Luke xix. 37, 38. must appear vain to any person who is not prepossessed in favour of that scheme. But the circumstance which makes the tendency of the scheme to superstition conspicuous is this; that their chief plea is not, that the making of new psalms or hymns for the solemn worship of the church is a divine appointment. Among the commendations of this scheme the Lord's authority binding us to it is seldom heard: but a profusion of other pleas are employed.

THE singing of the scripture songs is said to be a poor low exercise, which would sink the gospel beneath

the level of Judaism. Nay, it is said to disturb rather than promote devotion. It is said to be a singing of one thing and meaning another; which must be sad work indeed. But when they turn their attention to the favourite scheme of psalmody, what a delightful scene opens! Why, to use the words of a great author, on a very different subject, it is, it seems, "so full of goodly prospects and melodious sounds on every side, "that the harp of Orpheus was not more charming." For here we have songs adapted to our superior knowledge, and to the variety and warmth of our devout affections: the ardour of which was damped by the Jewish psalmody. Here we are not taken up with what respected the peculiar condition of the Jewish church: but we have songs that describe our own situation, which paint matters to the life, present objects as they really are, and consequently give to expression energy to touch the heart. The songs recorded in scripture and used in old testament-worship were composed on occasion of such and such present dispensations of providence; and why should not we compose ours in the same manner? we are surely in a capacity of furnishing ourselves with songs suitable to our circumstances, as well as the old Jews were. How can we have the new song spoken of in the Revelation, without a new psalmody? some that are not acquainted with the enthusiasm of this scheme will be apt to suspect that what is now ascribed to the defenders of it is rather exaggerated and satirical: but all that are acquainted with their writings know that it is a simple rehearsal of topics on which they delight to dwell and expatiate.

THE substance of such declamation, when put into the form of an argument, is to this purpose: what is most agreeable to our ideas of suitableness and fitness for promoting devotion, should be used in our solemn worship. But the new scheme of psalmody is most agreeable to our ideas of suitableness and fitness for promoting devotion. Therefore, the new scheme of psalmody should be used in our solemn worship. Now, a devotee of the church of Rome would desire no more to be granted him for the justification of his crucifixes,



his images, his reliques, and all the other trumpery of superstition, than the first of these propositions. There will be no end of innovations in the worship of God, if men be suffered to regulate it according to their notions of what is calculated to promote devotion. Will-worship is just our doing something in the worship of God which is right in our own eyes, according to our own thoughts, *Isai. lxx. 2.* in opposition to a simple and implicit acquiescence in the prescriptions of the word of God concerning the manner of his worship.

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#### C H A P. IV.

##### *Of the use of Musick in Religious worship.*

**I**N the discourse on Singing Psalms, the following proposition was laid down, *That, in the public praises of the church, the outward part ought to be conducted with decency and simplicity; but the spiritual part ought chiefly to be regarded.* The objections that have been made to the illustration of this proposition in the discourse gives occasion to what is offered in the following sections.

SECT. I. Of the agreement of worshippers represented by joint singing.

IT was observed in the discourse, that the decency which ought to be studied by worshiping families and congregations is such an agreement or harmony of voices, as may fitly represent an agreement of minds in understanding and believing what is sung, and in the exercise of suitable gracious affections. To this it has been objected, "that singing is neither a natural nor an instituted sign of the agreement of minds\*."

\* An examination, &c. page 26.

ANSWER. It is true, that singing, abstractly considered, is not a sign of such agreement; but social singing, like the outward performance of all other social worship, is undoubtedly so. Thus, joint prayer is represented as our *agreeing together touching what we ask*, Matth. xviii. 19. Surely an agreement of minds is represented by singing together with the voice in Isai. lii. 8. *The watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye.* The true ministers of Jesus Christ are said to sing together with the voice, because, as Vitranga observes, *idem sentiunt, idem docent*, they think and teach the same thing. It is true, there may and always will be, in the visible church on earth, some diversity in the views and exercises of worshippers: yet what is becoming and fit to be expressed in the outward part of social worship, and what the worshippers should study to attain, is not diversity, but agreement; or that they may *with one mind and one mouth glorify God.*

## SECT. II. Of the Effect of Musick in Religious Worship.

THE Discourse on Singing Psalms has been charged with inconsistency, because it represents this as a natural sentiment, that poetry and musick should be used to express suitable affections in the worship of the Supreme Being: it allows singing to be a natural and proper expression of our affections; and, as the ordinance of God, to be a mean which he makes effectual in promoting gracious affections: and yet asserts that, though musick, as an art, serves to excite natural affections, it is a delusion to suppose that it will, *in like manner*, excite those that are supernatural and heavenly\*.

In the first of these passages it is meant, that the light of nature, in the heathens, led them to think that they should worship the Deity with songs of praise. There was a glimmering of truth in this sentiment; yet it was far from being any suitable apprehension of the spiritual nature of that worship which God reveals in his word. Following the imagination of their own heart, and thinking that God was one like them-

\* An examination, &c. page 27.

selves, they concluded that he was pleased, when their own natural affections were excited by musical sounds. They were so far right, in supposing that the Deity was to be worshipped by praying and singing: yet they knew nothing of the right manner of performing either.

It is necessary to distinguish between *natural* affections, and those that are *supernatural* and *spiritual*. It is allowed that music is a proper mean of exciting the former, but not in like manner, of exciting the latter. It is likewise necessary to distinguish between the divine ordinance of *singing* psalms and the *art of music*. Many observe the singing of psalms as God's ordinance, and have their spiritual affections thereby promoted; who are altogether ignorant of music as an art. Upon a candid consideration of these distinctions, one should think that it might be allowed, that the appearance of inconsistency complained of was owing to an endeavour to express the truth with precision, and to guard against dangerous extremes.

For the father explanation of this subject, the following observations are offered.

1. VERY little music as an art, is necessary for promoting our attention to the Lord's word and for expressing our joint adherence to it. Perhaps greater improvements in the art of music may not always do harm; but is delusion to imagine, that they contribute to render our exercise more suitable, or our affections more pious.

2. It is dangerous to represent the word and music as means of the same order or nature for promoting gracious and supernatural affections. The word cannot be received according to its genuine nature, without exciting spiritual affections: but music may not only affect the outward senses, but also raise the natural passions to the highest pitch, while the soul remains utterly estranged from spiritual affections.

3. SUPPOSING the natural affections to be ever so much moved by musical sounds, such affections have, at best, no religion in them, nor are of any farther use in religious singing, than as they are means of preventing distraction, and engaging the attention to the words that are sung. Which words, according to their true

meaning, are the proximate or nearest outward mean of divine appointment for exciting spiritual affections.

4. THEY who say, that singing is a proper mean of godly sorrow, because the plaintive sounds that are made use of therein are proper for exciting the natural affection of sorrow ; or that singing is a proper mean of exciting spiritual joy in the Lord, because the lively sounds made use of are proper for exciting the natural affection of joy, suppose that the agreeableness of the singing to the animal part of our nature makes it, or contributes to make it profitable to our souls.

5. IT is granted, that there is much of the goodness of God manifested in ordering what belongs to the mere outward performance of religious duties, to be, in general, what is easy and agreeable to the animal part, and, in this respect, to be remote from the austerities and bodily labour of superstition ; yet if we look upon that agreeableness to our animal part as what renders the duty a mean of spiritual good to our souls, we shall be in as great and dangerous a mistake, as they are in, who consider austerity and bodily pain in that light. The easiness or agreeableness of the outward part of religion makes men's neglect of it the more inexcusable ; yet it is far from being that which renders, or even so much as contributes to render it profitable to our souls. There is reason to suppose that placing religion in the agreeableness of an exercise to the senses and imagination, is even more dangerous and delusive than placing religion in the disagreeableness of it. This supposition appears to be verified by what we see of both extremes in the church of Rome. The austerity of a few individuals is ostentatiously displayed, but it is manifest that their pardons, their indulgences, the pomp and magnificence of their worship, and almost all their superstitions, are calculated to gratify the senses and imaginations of the multitude.

6. To suppose that singing is a more proper mean of promoting spiritual affections in proportion as the music is better adapted to the animal part of our nature, is enthusiastic and delusive in itself, and opens the door to an inundation of enthusiasm and superstition ; for as the



supposition that a thing is a mean of good to our souls, because it is adapted to the animal part of our nature, is superstitious and enthusiastic ; so when the introduction of such observances into religious worship is once begun, there is no end of it. One will find one contrivance well adapted, to human nature, another will find something else better adapted and so forth.

7. It is in vain to reply, that singing is a divine institution ; for where is it to be found in scripture, that singing is an appointed mean of good to our souls, because it is adapted to the animal part of our nature, or because there is some analogy between the sensations produced by musical sounds and our natural affections ? Where is it revealed that one mode of singing is a more proper mean of exciting spiritual affections than another ; singing the parts, for example, than singing otherwise ? If it were so, it would be the duty of every christian to learn that particular mode of singing, and the most expert in it might be expected to be the most lively christians.

8. We do not say, that more complex or artificial singing, as singing the parts, is, in itself, unlawful or superstitious ; but whenever we suppose, that it is necessary, or a whit more proper, for promoting spiritual affections than a more simple mode of singing, we deviate into folly and superstition. Modes of singing are indifferent in themselves ; but the representing of a particular mode of singing as necessary, or as a better mean of promoting spiritual affections than another, is to be rejected as an attempt to introduce superstition and to entangle the consciences of men.

9. WITH regard to outward order, two extremes are to be avoided ; a rude confusion of voices, on the one hand ; and, on the other, a manner of singing which is too complex and artificial ; and the attainment of which would require too much time and attention. For it is but idleness and folly for church members, and especially the rising generation, to throw away the time and attention upon the foppery of musical sounds, which ought to be employed in the diligent use of means for acquainting themselves with the principles of our holy re-

ligion, and for establishing themselves in the truth, in opposition to the prevailing errors and corruptions of our times. If church-members were concerned, like the men of Issachar, to *have understanding of the times and to know what Israel ought to do*, to know the present duty and danger of the church and of particular christians, they would have little time to spare for the learning of new modes of music.

THIS section may be concluded in the words of a late valuable publication, entitled, *The Christian Remembrancer*. "I cannot," says the author of that performance, "but shake my head, when I hear an officer of the church calling upon the people, 'to sing to the praise and glory of God ;' and immediately half a dozen merry men, in a high place, shall take up the matter, and most loudly chant it away to the praise and glory of themselves. The tune, perhaps, shall be too difficult for the most part of the congregation, who have no leisure to study crotchets and quavers. and so the most delightful of all public worship shall be wrested from them, and the praises of God taken out of their mouths. It is no matter whence the custom rose. In itself it is neither holy, decent, nor useful ; and therefore ought to be banished entirely from the churches of God.—I am no enemy to music as an human art ; but let all things be in their place. The pleasures of the ear are not the gracious acts of God's spirit on the soul ; but the effects of vibrated matter on an outward sense. This may be indulged as an innocent and ingenious amusement ; but what have our amusements to do with the solemn and sacred adorations of God ? Would not this be carnal, and after the modes of the world, and not after Christ."

SECT. III. Of the use of Instrumental Music in religious worship.

THE Discourse on Singing Psalms has been censured for representing the use of instrumental music in divine worship as not belonging to the moral, but to the ceremonial law. Some reasons are given, which have been often

made use of by Presbyterians, and which (when the favour of a fair examination can be obtained, and the calm voice of reason heard) will be found solid. For the farther explanation of this subject, the following observations are offered.

1. WE observe, that the saints in the old testament church were not led to the use of instrumental music in their worship by the dictates of human reason, but by a positive institution of God, Numbers x. 8. *The sons of Aarón the priest shall blow with the trumpets: and they shall be to you for an ordinance for ever throughout your generations.* The same language is made use of about the passover, Exodus xii. 14. Psalm lxxxi. 3, 4, 5. *Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psallery. Blow up the trumpet in the new moon: in the time appointed on our solemn feast day. For this was a statute for Israel; and a law of the God of Jacob.* There can be no doubt, that the appointments of musicians, which were made in the days of David, were by divine inspiration, since they were communicated to the church by inspired men; by David, Asaph, Heman, and Ethan. Nay, this is expressly declared, 2 Chron. xxix. 25. *Hezekiah set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets.* Hence it is mere vanity to affect to find the reason of this old testament usage in the power and influence of the art of music.

2. WE observe, that, if this were not a ceremonial, but a moral command, then it must be binding on all christian churches; and each of them ought to use cymbals and psalteries and harps in their worship; and that as belonging, not to their occasional, but, as much as any thing else, to their stated worship: And then it would follow, that something belonging to the stated and ordinary solemn worship, that God had appointed to be observed in the christian church, was utterly neglected by the church under the direction of the apostles, and

for more than fix centuries after them : which is manifestly absurd\*.

IF this command to use instrumental music be obligatory on us, we must either be restricted to the particular instruments specified in that command, or not so. If we are not restricted to these instruments, by what rule shall we determine what or how many ought to be used in our churches ? But if we are restricted to them, then this command has been disregarded even by those new testament churches that have admitted the use of instrumental music in their worship : for we know not any of them that pretend to have cymbals and psalteries. Nay, the use of them seems to be now impracticable, the knowledge of them being, in a great measure, lost. The Jewish writers themselves, says Calvin on the xxxiii. psalm, have nothing solid or that can be depended on with respect to the form of these instruments.

4. THE command to use instrumental music in divine worship is like the other commands of the ceremonial law in this respect, that the subject-matter of it, considered in itself, is a carnal unmeaning thing, and utterly unprofitable to the soul. Hence Arnobius, in his book against the Gentiles, justly represents the instrumental music which they used in the worship of their gods as ridiculous. “What is there,” says he, “in the tinkling of brass, that your divinities should be so mightily delighted with it ? Or, perhaps, as infants are frightened from their foolish screaming by the shaking of a rattle ; so your gods, even in their terrible fits of rage, are much frightened at the squeaking of your pipes, and are softened to the meekness of lambs by the repeated strokes of your cymbals.” Instrumental music has no meaning but what it owes either to imagination or to institution. Considered as deriving a meaning from imagination, it is hurtful in religion :

\* Protestants should be ashamed to plead for the use of instrumental music in the worship of God, after Bellarmine has confessed, that the use of musical instruments agreeth not alike with the perfect and with the imperfect, and that therefore they began but of late to be admitted in the church. *De Con. oper. libr. 1.*



Considered as deriving a meaning from institution, it is of the same nature with the other typical ordinances of the old testament dispensation.

5. THE use of instrumental music in the worship of God, which we read of in the reigns of David and Solomon, manifestly belonged to the peculiar service of the temple: and there is no probability in the supposition, that it was used in families or synagogues.

OBJECTION. "Instrumental music in divine worship was practised before either tabernacle or temple existed; as appears from the instance of Miriam and all the women of Israel, using timbrels in praising God for their deliverance from Pharaoh, to have been a common practice; otherwise we cannot conceive how they all at once could touch that instrument in a suitable manner. The company of prophets mentioned 1 Sam. x. 5. having a psaltery, a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp before them, is another instance to the same purpose\*."

ANSWER. Suppose these women to have frequently practised instrumental music before; yet it does not follow, that they had practised it before in religious worship; because it might be used on a civil account; as appears to have been the case of the instrumental music which the women used in the congratulation of Saul upon his victory over the Philistines, 1 Sam. xviii. 6. And supposing instrumental music had been used in religious worship before, the case was the same with other observances of the ceremonial law. Many of the laws respecting these observances had been made known to the people of God before; but Moses committed them to writing, and when the people of Israel were formed into a nation and church, many ceremonial offices, which had before been performed in almost every professing family, were appropriated, by an express appointment of God, to the priesthood in the tribe of Levi, and were at last limited to the tabernacle or temple. This was undoubtedly the case with sacrifices. In a word, the case of Miriam and the women in this text might as well be alleged for the

\* An examination, &c. page 3.

moral and perpetual use of dancing in religious worship ; as for the use of instrumental music in it. As for the other text in 1 Sam. x. 5. we have considered it already, and shewn it to be of an extraordinary nature. Only it is worthy of observation, that, though the singing of the prophets in this passage and that of the new testament-prophets in 1 Cor. xiv. may well be considered as parallel to one another in other respects, yet they differed in this ; that the former was with, and the latter was without instrumental music ; intimating that no such music was to be used in new-testament worship.

OBJECTION. " Although David instituted a select choir to attend constantly the place where God peculiarly placed his name, yet it would be a strange way of reasoning to infer from thence, that the use of instruments in the worship of God every where else, was thereby interdicted\*."

ANSWER. Every circumstance in the appointment of the singers in the temple speaks its peculiar nature. The musicians were appointed to the service of song in the house of the Lord, and in no other place, 1 Chron. vi. 31. and xxv. 6. They were divided into twenty four classes : which classes were restricted not only to one tribe, but to certain families in that tribe. Surely it will be hard to find such restrictions with respect to any moral duty, or with respect to any thing which is, (as the objector represented the use of instrumental music in divine worship ; ) the duty of every one who has a talent or capacity for it.

WHEN it is said, that David appointed singers, we are to understand it in the same sense in which it is said that Moses commanded such and such usages ; for the appointment of the singers to their office in the temple, as was before observed, was by an express command of God ;—a command no less so, than that by which the high-priest was appointed to his office.

IF it be said, that the general command to praise God with musical instruments would warrant any one that was instructed in such music to use it in the worship of

\* An Examination, &c. page 53, 54.

God, we answer, that, after the special appointment of the fingers in the house of the Lord, such a command would no more warrant any one, that did not belong to the classes before mentioned, to use musical instruments in the worship of God, than the command in Psal. lxxxix. 3. *Blow up the trumpet in the new moon*, would warrant any other than the priests to do so. Such general commands are always to be understood according to other places of scripture, which define particularly by whom and in what manner such a duty is to be performed. If it be said, that David himself was none of these classes; yet he represents himself as praising God with musical instruments. We answer, that we may understand this singing of that which was peculiar to the prophets; of which we have already spoken. Besides, David might be said to sing on these instruments, because he, as a prophet, appointed the Levites to this service, and gave them their songs. In a similar sense, he says, in Psal. lxxvi. *I will offer bullocks upon thine altar*: because the priest would offer the bullocks upon it, which he brought to them.

OBJECTION. "It never can be proved, that the Jews had any synagogue-worship, till after the Babylonish captivity; and when synagogues were erected, it cannot be proved, that the singing of psalms was a part of the worship there performed. There is just the same reason to believe the Jews might and did use instrumental music in their ordinary worship, in the synagogues and private families, as that they sung the praises of God in them; for scripture is equally silent with regard to both\*."

ANSWER. That synagogues were in use among the Israelites long before the Babylonish captivity, says a learned writer, is credible: For not only does king David in psal. lxxiv. 4. complain that *the enemies roared* Heb. *Bechereb mognadecha*, which Pagninus renders, *in the midst of thy synagogues*; and which Luther also interprets of the schools and synagogues in which the word of God is taught: and in verse 8. *They have burnt* Heb. *Kal mognadei*

\* An examination, &c. page 53.

*el, all the synagogues of God in the land.* But the law concerning the sabbath in Levit. xxiii. 3, 4. will hardly fail to persuade the candid that the Israelites had, all along, their congregations or synagogues which they attended on that day. The words of the sacred text are : *Six days shall work be done : but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation ; ye shall do no work therein : it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings. These are the feasts of the Lord, holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.* Now it seems plain, that when the people were settled in the land of Canaan, and were engaged six days of the week, in their ordinary labour, they could not attend at Shiloh, or afterwards at Jerusalem, from which many of them were at so great a distance, for holding a holy convocation or assembly for religious worship, every sabbath, as this text requires. Wherefore, since such worshipping assemblies were so necessary for preserving and propagating the true religion, we may well believe, that the children of Israel, from the time of their settlement in the land of Canaan, had synagogues or places of meeting for social worship. Several authors, indeed, have placed the origin of the synagogues after the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon ; and suppose that the order and ceremonies of the synagogues was after the example of that reading and explaining of the law which we have an account of in Nehem. viii. With regard to the synagogue service, as consisting of various particular rites and ceremonies which, in course of time, were gradually introduced, we may allow that it was after the Babylonish captivity ; but it seems plain that, long before it, the people had public assemblies for social worship, and for hearing the discourses of such as instructed them in the knowledge of the divine word\*.

As to the synagogue worship, we know that the reading of the prophets was a part of it, Acts xiii. 15, 27. nor can we suppose, without absurdity, that prayer and praise, which are indispensable duties of the moral law,

\* Pritius's Introduction to the reading of the new testament, chap. 46.



were neglected. As to instrumental music, what of it is represented in scripture, as ever having place in the stated worship of the church, is so manifestly restricted to the temple, that we cannot, without absurdity, suppose it to have any place in the synagogue worship, unless there were some declaration to that purpose.

SINCE the scripture represents singing praise with the voice as the ordinary duty of all sorts of men ; but the religious use of instrumental music as restricted to particular persons, times, and places ; it cannot be said to be equally silent of the practice of the former in families and synagogues as of the practice of the latter. No family could have a suitable regard to the duty of praising God with the voice as a good, a pleasant, and a comely exercise, Psal. cxlvii. 1. and yet live in the neglect of it. Besides, it is expressly declared in Psal. cxviii. 15. that *the voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles or dwellings of the righteous*. There seems to be nothing to hinder us from understanding tabernacles here as comprehending both synagogues and private families. Our Lord's singing a hymn with his disciples is an instance of family praise\* : and as what he did on this occasion was agree-

\* It was hinted in a note at the beginning of the Discourse on *Singing Psalms*, that, in the original text, we have not a substantive noun answering to the word *hymn*, though it be implied in the participle. This was taken notice of purely to shew how far the Evangelist is from determining what *particular* composition it was, which our Lord made use of on this occasion. The author of the Examination, page 5. pretends there is an ambiguity in this note, as if the expression *in the original*, might signify *in the Greek language* ; but it is hoped, there are few that read with any attention that will complain of this ambiguity. He adds, that " the observations, in his sermon, on that expression, remain unaffected." It is allowed, that this was the least material of any thing that was urged ; and therefore the pretended Examiner thought proper to fix on it, while he passes over what was, indeed, intended for argument. He says, in his sermon, that there are " none of the psalms which directly apply to that ordinance." If by *applying directly to this ordinance*, he means a composition which gives an account of the actual institution of this ordinance, his principle is absurd ; as if we are never to consider a *hymn* as applicable to any occasion ; unless that occasion be *expressly* mentioned in it. We have taken notice of the absurdity of this supposition already, in chap. iii. under the 2d argument. But we

able, we have reason to believe, to the ordinary practice of families in celebrating the passover, it is a proof of what is also attested by the Jewish writers, that there was on this occasion, singing of psalms in the families of Israel. All this is surely more than any thing which can be found in scripture, with respect to the use of musical instruments in the worship of God in synagogues and families.

6. It is also to be observed, that the Holy Spirit makes use of instrumental musick, as a figure or emblem of what was to be fulfilled in Christ and his church. Thus, when it is said, in the *xlvi. Psalm*, *God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.* This being understood, as it undoubtedly ought to be, of Christ's ascension, the sound of a trumpet must be taken figuratively. Thus, the trumpets and the harps

have abundance of passages in the book of psalms that are directly applicable to the subject-matter of this ordinance : such as, those which describe the sufferings of Christ, as in the *22d* and *69th Psalms* : and such as describe Christ and his benefits under the notion of suitable and abundant provision, as in *Psalm xxii. 26. xxiii. 1, 5. xxxvi. 8*. It is manifest that the subject-matter of the passover and that of the Lord's supper are one and the same : both are seals of the same covenant of grace : both set forth Christ's obedience unto the death as the proper condition ; and eternal life as the great promise of it : thus the subject-matter was the same, the difference between them lying only in the outward symbols and circumstances : hence it appears, that when we argue from the usual singing of psalms on occasion of the celebration of the passover to our Saviour's singing them on occasion of both the passover and the Lord's supper, we are not chargeable with "such reasoning as if one were to say, the premises are different, therefore the conclusion must be the same:" it is rather reasoning in this manner : that there was no necessity of using other hymns than those which had been commonly used at the celebration of the passover, on account of the institution of the Lord's supper ; because the subject-matter of the Lord's supper was the same with that of the passover : and therefore authentic records of what the Jews used to sing on occasion of the passover, which our Lord had just been celebrating, may warrantably be made use of to throw light on the passage under consideration, especially considering that, if there had been any thing singular in what our Lord sung on this occasion, we have reason to suppose, that it would have been taken notice of by one or another of the evangelists.

in Reve. viii. 6. and xiv 2. are to be understood as emblems taken from the ceremonial usages of the old testament. So the following analogies between the instrumental music of the temple and the preaching of the gospel, taken notice of by a very learned and ingenious writer\*, appear not to be without a real foundation in scripture. 1 David, as an inspired prophet, appointed the ceremonial worship by musical instruments; so the preaching of the gospel to all nations was appointed by Christ the spiritual David, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. Hosea iii. 5, 2. The instrumental music began and ended with the burnt-offering; so the preaching of the gospel is founded on the sacrifice of Christ, and is indeed no other than a commemoration of it. 1 Cor. i. 23. 3. The variety of the musical instruments in matter, form and use, might represent the variety of articles in the great mystery of godliness, and of gifts employed in preaching it, 1 Cor. xii. 7—10. 4. In order to make an harmonious concert, it was necessary for the players on these instruments to observe the notes, or what was equivalent to notes of musick, accurately, and to express them by distinct sounds. In like manner, to produce harmony in the faith and profession of the truth, it is necessary that the preachers and professors thereof adhere stedfastly to the rule of God's word, and that they declare the doctrine thereof plainly and distinctly. 1 Corinth. xiv. 7, 8, 9. *And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise you, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak in the air.* 5. The different tones of the musical instruments deserve notice. The sounds of some are more clear and shrill; those of others more soft and sweet; and those of others more deep and grave. So, in the pure preaching of the gospel, there is a diversity of matter. Sometimes it commends itself to the babes

\* Adolphus Lampe, in his dissertations on the 45th Psalm.

in Christ by its simplicity ; sometimes it elevates the mind by its sublimity ; sometimes it breathes the sweetness of the promises ; and sometimes the horror of the threatnings. 6. As to the sound of the temple-musick, it was heard at a great distance, commending itself by its peculiar sweetness. So the preaching of the gospel is a most sweet and joyful sound, which hath already extended to almost all the regions of the earth, and shall extend still farther, Rom. x. 18. *But I say, have they not heard ? Yea, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.* Lastly, In this consideration of instrumental music, the natural influence of it is not to be overlooked. The effects of it are enumerated in the following verses.

Music exalts each joy, allays each grief,  
Expels diseases, softens every pain,  
Subdues the rage of poison and the plague.

THESE effects of musick serve to shadow forth the supernatural efficacy of the gospel in the hand of the Spirit : for it *opens the eyes of sinners ; it turns them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive the forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in Christ.* It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

## C H A P. V.

*Consisting of Miscellaneous matters.*

SECT. I. Of the rules of the Interpretation of Scripture.

IT is observed, in the discourse on Singing Psalms, that if the literal sense of a passage of scripture be contrary to the current of scripture-doctrine, if it be



trivial, affording no spiritual or practical instruction, if it be unsuitable to the scope and connection of the place ; then it is necessary to depart from the literal sense.

OBJECTION. " This is not the rule by which we may know when a passage is to be taken figuratively : but the rule is this, when the literal sense of a text would involve an absurdity, we must conclude, it is figurative ; and also when the scripture itself discovers any particular passage in it to be so. There are some scripture passages which have what may be called a double sense\*."

ANSWER. Some have defined the literal sense to be that which the Holy Spirit first intended to signify by the words, whether they be used in the simple grammatical sense or figuratively. This is indeed the only true signification of the words of scripture, from which we are never to depart. But here, in speaking of the literal sense, we mean that sense only in which the rules of grammar teach us to take any passage of scripture ; as contradistinguished to the sense in which some passages or expressions are to be taken, according to the rules of figurative language. The question, then, is, when a particular passage is to be taken in a literal, and when in figurative sense. This being premised, we offer the following observations on the subject.

I. WHAT the objector lays down as a rule may and indeed ought to be understood in a sense perfectly agreeable to what is said in the discourse : because all the things that are specified, as rendering it necessary to take a passage of scripture in a figurative sense, are such as involve great absurdity. For, in the first place, to suppose that a text contains a sense contrary to the current doctrine of scripture, is to suppose that the scripture contradicts itself : In the next place, to suppose that the sense of a text is such as is no way profitable, either for doctrine, or for reproof, or for correction, or for instruction in righteousness, is likewise to suppose that the scripture contradicts itself ; because it expressly asserts that all scripture is profitable for these purposes, and

\* An examination, &c. pages 55, 58.

that whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope, 2 Tim. iii. 16. Rom. xv. 4. Some can see little or no instruction in the account of Samson's collecting so many foxes. But there is no necessity to depart from the literal sense here, for want of instruction; since the connexion of it with Samson's just resentment, and the consequent overthrow of the enemies of God's people, is abundantly instructive and affords rich matter of meditation. Nor is there the least necessity, for the sake of instruction, to depart from the literal sense of the list that is given us of the dukes of Edom: for these are a cloud of witnesses to the fulfilment of the promises which had been made to Esau. And whereas the Edomites are represented as in a flourishing condition, while the chosen people of God were in a state of poverty and oppression; his people, in all after-times, may hence learn, that no strange thing happens to them, if they see their enemies enjoy great outward prosperity, while themselves are in great distress. We frequently overlook the instruction that is contained in a passage of scripture; but to suppose there is none in it is rash, blasphemous, and absurd. If we can see little instruction in a text considered by itself, let us attend to its connexion with, and dependance on, what goes before or follows it; and we shall readily see something of the necessity and usefulness of it: and supposing we should not be able to see so much; nothing less can be implied in a due reverence of the word of God, than a persuasion that there is precious instruction, even, where our inattention or unbelief hinders us from apprehending it.

As to the danger of always having recourse to the supposition of a figure or allegory, where it is difficult (not to say *impossible*; for that would be a denial of the perspicuity of the scripture, which is necessary to its answering the end for which it was given) to find the meaning of a passage, *where the structure of its sentences may be perplexed, the terms ambiguous, or where it may refer to customs and facts with which we are unacquainted,*

or the subject may be beyond our comprehension, &c\*. it is but an imaginary danger; in such cases we are to acknowledge our ignorance: we are in no condition to determine the sense of the text to be either literal or figurative: the danger is equal whichever way we take it: all we have to do in this case is to mark where knowledge ends and ignorance begins. In such cases, we may venture to say, that the rash attempts of some learned men to accomodate the literal sense of texts to their apprehensions, by pretended emendations of the text and by artful criticism, have done as much harm to the church of God, as the more obviously impertinent attempts of others to find allegories and mystical meanings in such parts of scripture. In the third place, it is absurd, to suppose that a text may be taken in a sense which is unsuitable to the scope and circumstances thereof. For where any writer or speaker is manifestly pursuing some purpose, and exposition which makes any part of his discourse bear a sense which is no way suitable to that purpose, and has no coherence with what goes before or what follows, must be either foreign to the mind of the writer or speaker; or it must represent his discourse in a ridiculous light. It is an ancient rule for the interpretation of scripture, From antecedents and consequents the true sense of scripture is gathered.

2. But what the objector means by absurd is, it seems, something different from and previous to the consideration of the analogy of faith, or the scope and circumstances of the text: for, says he, "you must *first* determine by another rule whether the text be really literal or figurative: and having determined this, then the sense of it must be regulated by the analogy of faith—or the scope of the place—or both†." So that the absurdity he means is not what arises from inconsistency with what is plainly the doctrine of the bible or the manifest design of the Holy Spirit in such a pas-

\* An examination, &c. page 56.

† An examination, &c. page 56.

sage, but inconsistency with his natural reason and pre-conceived opinions. Here we entirely differ from him: for, in the first place, though the literal sense of a passage or expression, taken by itself or without regard to the context, be consistent with reason or common sense, yet it will not always follow, that it is not to be taken figuratively. It is necessary to take the following passages figuratively, though there is nothing in the literal or grammatical sense of them that involves absurdity, that is, inconsistency with reason or common sense: Song ii. 12. *Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth: the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.* John xii. 24. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.* John xi. 9. *Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth because there is no light in him.* Upon the principle of the objector, namely, that, if a passage of scripture can by any means be brought to bear a literal meaning, consistent with natural reason or common sense, it must be taken literally, the Socinians proceed, when they deny the allegorical and spiritual sense of the Song of Solomon, representing that part of the sacred scriptures as an eclogue or idyllium, like those of Theocritus and Virgil, in which Solomon, they say, in the character of a shepherd, sings his love of Pharaoh's daughter; a supposition, which, however, has been often shewn to be as contrary to the history of the bible, as it is to the supernatural scope and design of it.

IN the second place, it is most dangerous to conclude, that the literal sense of a text involves an absurdity previous to the consideration of the analogy of faith and the circumstances of the text; and, upon the footing of such a conclusion, to determine that the text is to be taken figuratively. This is the very course that Socinians take with those texts which, literally understood, set forth the vicarious nature of the death of Christ. Hence they say, that redemption by the blood of Christ is not a



literal, but a figurative or metaphorical redemption ; and the true reason of this assertion is, that they have already concluded that a proper redemption by a satisfaction to divine justice, is impossible and absurd. In the same manner, they hold the true and proper divinity of Christ to be absurd ; and therefore, they reckon themselves under a necessity of taking all the places of scripture in which he is called God in an improper and figurative sense, as when civil magistrates are so called.

IN condemning this method of procedure in the interpretation of scripture, it is not meant that there can be any thing really absurd or contradictory to right reason in the true sense of scripture ; but that, when we meet with a passage that seems so to us, we should conclude, not that we are to understand it figuratively, but either that it sets forth some mystery, which is above the sphere of our reason, or that we do not, as yet, understand it : in which case it must be rashness to determine how the words are to be taken till we have examined them more closely, till we have considered their connection with what goes before and follows, and compared them with other texts, that relate to the same subject.

3. WHAT the objector says about some passages of scripture having a double meaning, is very exceptionable ; for, though he tells us that the only rule for determining what passages of scripture have this double, sense, is, “the discoveries of the mind of God in them by his inspired messengers\* ;” yet what he says, implies that a person may have a just view of the sense of a particular text according to the scope and connection of the place where it is ; and yet the same text may have a quite different sense put upon it by an inspired messenger. The objector seems herein to agree with the Papists, who maintain that, in the same words of scripture, different senses are contained. We join with the bulk of Protestant divines in opposition to this opinion, for such reasons as the following :

\* An examination, &c. page 58.

FIRST, This scheme of the words of scripture having more senses than one, has no foundation in the scripture itself. Bellarmine and other Popish doctors produce various places of scripture, which, they say, are to be taken literally in the old testament; and yet are explained in a spiritual and mystical sense in the new. Such, according to them, are those which speak of the coming of the Israelites out of Egypt, of their passage through the Red Sea, of the manna, of the water that came out of the rock, and the like.

WITH our divines, we answer, that, in some places of the new testament, where they pretend that a new sense is put upon some passage of the old testament, there is no such thing. There is only an accommodation of the words to express or illustrate a subject, to which something that is meant by the words, in the place where they are found in the old testament, bears a certain analogy or resemblance: There seems to be such an accommodation of this expression of the nineteenth Psalm. *Their words to the end of the world*, in Rom. x. 18.

AGAIN, it is not denied, what there are, in scripture, many allegories, that is, continued metaphors, or images of things expressed by words; and types, that is, images of things expressed by things; but we assert that an allegory has as much one determinate signification as what is to be understood literally: and also, that a type under the old testament, and the thing signified by it, did not, properly speaking, constitute two senses, but two parts of one and the same sense; for it would be absurd to say of a picture of king William the third of England, that it represented two persons, for it is plain, that, considered as a portrait answering the intention of the painter, it would represent that prince alone. Types were pictures of their antitypes.

IT is farther argued against the scheme of putting more senses than one upon a passage of scripture, that it has no foundation in logic, grammar or rhetoric. What cannot be understood according to the rules delivered in these arts, is not intelligible at all: but no passage can be understood as having more senses than one, according

to these rules : therefore, a passage having more senses than one is not intelligible at all. But it is contrary to the perspicuity of the scripture, (than which there is no other property of it more certain) to say, that there is any thing in it that cannot be understood according to the rules of human speech ; since God speaks in condescension to our capacity, and in order to be understood. We allow, that natural men do not apprehend spiritual things according to the representation of them in the word ; but this is owing not at all to any obscurity or ambiguity in the manner of expressing these things ; but to the unsuitableness of their natural apprehensions to the spiritual and sublime nature of them. The words are the fittest that human language could afford for expressing these things ; and all our commentaries and discourses on them are no farther to be valued, than as they serve to point out that fitness and engage our attention to it. We allow also, that we experience an obscurity in the typical and allegorical parts of scripture ; but this arises from our want of that knowledge (which never could be said to be absolutely unattainable) of what is signified by the words or by the typical things ; or from our overlooking some of the numerous circumstances that are necessary to be attended to in order to the due understanding of such passages. All this is quite different from the hypothesis of the scripture having more senses than one.

We cannot conceive that our Lord and his apostles, in arguing with the Jews and others, from passages of the old testament, understood these passages otherwise than according to the common rules of logic, grammar or rhetoric ; that is, so as, the people they had to deal with were obliged to acknowledge, they ought to be understood : for the rules delivered in these arts are no other principles of common sense admitted and practised by all mankind, abstractly considered and reduced to systems. Our Lord and his apostles were far from imposing any sense upon the old testament, but proceeded upon what their opponents could not deny to be its true meaning, or, in other words, they reasoned justly from it.

OBJECTION. How does it agree with this doctrine concerning the unity of the sense of scripture, to make the sacrifices under the law both typify the death of Christ and represent the services of believers ?

ANSWER. It is, indeed, one thing to typify or prefigure ; and another thing, merely to represent or express. The death of Christ was, in a primary and proper sense, a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice : and it was fitly typified or prefigured by the umbratile or shadowy sacrifices of the ceremonial law. But this is no way inconsistent with the consideration of the presenting or offering of these sacrifices as an instance of the obedience of believers, or with the employment of it to represent or express other instances of their obedience, 1 Pet. ii. 5. *Ye are an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices.* For though the offering of sacrifices, as it was an institution of the ceremonial law, was purely typical, *a shadow of good things to come* ; yet, as it was a signal instance of acceptable obedience to God's command, it was of the same nature with any other part of religious worship required in the moral law. The offerer of a sacrifice, so far as he was rightly exercised, acted faith in the death of Christ as the sole ground of his pardon and acceptance with God ; he made the revealed will of God the only rule and reason of his obedience, and made a solemn dedication of himself to God. In respect of these things, which are manifestly of a moral nature, the offering of sacrifices is fitly made use of in scripture to express the services of believers in general. In this view, it did not typify but represent\* or express : in this view, it did not signify what was to come, but what was always present in the church, namely, the spiritual services of believers. Here are not two different senses ; but, as is frequently the case, one sense comprehending two things ; one of which is, the typical form of the act shadowing forth the

\* *To represent* here means to put the name of one thing for that of another, as when our Lord calls Herod a fox ; or it is to put an individual for all of the same kind ; as in Jerem. viii. 7. *the stork, the crane, the swallow,* are put for birds in general of these several kinds. So when Isaiah says, *The ox knoweth his owner,* he means oxen in general.



death of Christ; and the other, the spiritual service of the offerer, which might be used to express any other instance of acceptable service: So it is used to express prayer, Psal. cxli. 2. Offices of charity, Heb. xiii. 15. godly sorrow for sin, Psal. li. 17.

WE shall conclude this part of our subject with a few remarks on the treatment of some particular texts, by the objector who has been so often mentioned in the preceding pages.

IN the Discourse on the divine ordinance of Singing Psalms some observations had been offered on the lxxxiv. psalm, in order to shew that the words of that psalm are not without instruction suitable to the new testament dispensation. This excites the objector's resentment. "In order," says he, "to make way for the application of his false rule" [that of the writer of the above-mentioned discourse] "about spiritual instruction, he confines the idea merely to the digging of a well (excluding every consideration of the reason of it) and to a company of Israelites in their way to Jerusalem, no matter who they were, whether pedlars or cow-drivers, or any thing else, according to him. Having dressed the subject according to his own taste, he cries out, that no serious christian can be satisfied\*."

ANSWER. In the Discourse on the divine ordinance of Singing Psalms, it was meant to separate that part of the psalmist's meaning which we cannot sing with truth as applicable to new testament worshippers, from what of it may be sung as applicable to them. Now, what is not at all applicable to us under the new testament, namely, the circumstance of the Israelites digging a well in their way to Jerusalem, no christian can be satisfied with as the whole of the psalmist's meaning. That circumstance is what the objector attempts to ridicule; though it be all the meaning which his own argument (if there were any,) allows the words of this passage: Accordingly the very appearance of his argument is lost, when he allows the words of the psalmist to mean "the providence of God supporting and protecting the pious

\* An examination, &c. page 61.

“ travellers, their enjoying the communications of his  
 “ love, and experimental acquaintance with the pleasures  
 “ and benefits of the public ordinances of divine wor-  
 “ ship\* ;” for it is obvious, that in this sense, the words  
 may be sung with as much truth and propriety under  
 the new testament as under the old. On the other hand,  
 what the objector turns into ridicule is only such a sense  
 as has nothing applicable to worshippers under the new  
 testament, and could not be sung as the sense of the  
 psalmist under any dispensation.

THE writer of the discourse, in representing the con-  
 struction which is put upon the psalmist’s words by the  
 reasoning of his opponents, spoke of *the Israelites journey*  
*to Jerusalem*, exclusive of any consideration of the true  
 reason of it, because that reason or inducement is the same  
 under both the old and new testament dispensation,  
 namely, the comfortable refreshment which the special  
 providence of God affords church-members in their at-  
 tendance on ordinances.

WE conclude, therefore, that the passage under con-  
 sideration may be sung with truth and propriety by  
 church-members under the new testament dispensation,  
 as not only instructive, but, in a great measure, applica-  
 ble to themselves ; unless it be taken in such a sense as  
 would make it applicable, as the objector observes, “ to  
 “ any company of Israelites no matter who they were,  
 “ whether pedlars, cowdrivers, or any thing else ; which,  
 “ to be sure, would be a poor, hungry, dry, insipid mor-  
 “ sel : and we need not think it strange, if a serious  
 “ christian make many a wry face in swallowing, and  
 “ grow lean in feeding upon it.”

WITH regard to what is said in the discourse, con-  
 cerning the cl. psalm, the objector says, “ that the wri-  
 “ ter of the discourse discovers that he can add to the  
 “ text, when that addition is necessary to support his  
 “ error.” And what is the ground of this accusation?  
 Why, it seems, the writer says, it is absurd to suppose  
 that all men are here commanded to play upon musical  
 instruments ; meaning that the text contains no such

command : and therefore says the objector, he adds to the psalm, "because it contains no such command\*." Is not this fine reasoning ?

THE objector speaks as if the psalmist had said expressly that some were to praise God with instruments, and some with the voice ; but we find no such division in the psalm. It appears that the psalmist employs the mode of praising the Lord prescribed to the Levites in the temple worship, (we do not say to typify, but) to represent or express all the ways or means in which the Lord hath appointed church-members to praise him either under the old or new testament. Thus we have observed that the offering of sacrifices are employed to represent or express other instances of acceptable obedience.

To take occasion from a text to compare a person or thing mentioned in it with another person or thing, for the sake of illustration, is different from giving the sense of that text. Were a minister, discoursing on the parable concerning the man that fell among the thieves and the kind offices of the Samaritan toward him, to tell his hearers that by the Samaritan they were to understand our Lord Jesus, his interpretation might be censured, as disagreeing with the scope of the parable†. But were he to tell the people, that, according to the design of the parable, the character of the Samaritan was that of a man who is enabled to give suitable evidence of genuine love to his neighbour ; that some measure of this love is to be found among them that love our Lord Jesus Christ : but that he himself is the great pattern of it ; that he found sinners in a far worse condition than the man was found in that had fallen among the thieves ; that he did infinitely more for them than the Samaritan could do for that poor man ; that faith's apprehension of this love of Christ is the only way to attain that love of our neighbour which it is the scope of the parable to enforce ; the minister, in all this, would be blameless ; though some inattentive hearers should be so injurious as

\* An examination, &c. page 59.

† An examination, &c. page 57.

to go away and report that the minister had turned the whole parable into a figurative representation of Adam's fall, and of his recovery by Jesus Christ. Such reports are but wretched materials even for common conversation ; but they must be much more so, for a printed performance.

THE making of a moral or practical reflection upon a fact recorded in a particular text of scripture is a very different thing from giving the sense of that text. Hence nothing could be more unjust than to represent a minister who had read in Ezra i. 9. that, among the vessels of the house of the Lord, that were brought from Babylon, there were twenty nine knives, as putting a figurative meaning upon that text ; merely, because he took occasion from the fact therein recorded, to mention the special providence of God exercised about the concerns of his worship. As to the fact now mentioned being a memorable instance of that providence, it is no less than impiety to deny it. The very hairs of our head are all numbered ; how much more is the superintendency of providence to be acknowledged in the concerns of the church of God ? And how much more, still, in those things which had been the subject of a particular prophecy ? Jerem. xxvii. 21, 22. *The vessels that remain in the house of the Lord, shall be carried to Babylon, and there they shall be, until the day that I visit them, saith the Lord : then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.*

SECT. II. Of the light which is said to be rising on the Church with respect to the duty of singing in public worship.

THE light that is said to be rising on the church\*, is that of the opinion, that the singing of the book of psalms is wholly or partly to be laid aside from the solemn worship of the church of God as unsuitable to the new testament dispensation ; and that christians are now warranted to make psalms for themselves and for the public worship of the church.

\* The preface to an Examination, &c.



WE allow, that the church may receive an increase of light with respect to truth and duty : but there is both a *true* and a *false* light : and it behoves us carefully to distinguish the one from the other ; for the latter is gross darkness. The following differences between them ought to be observed.

1. THE true light carries conviction to the consciences of men as being no other than the light of God's word. Whatever the true light discovers as truth or duty, has *Thus saith the Lord*, or *Thus it is written* for its warrant. But false light always tends to bring us under some other influence or authority than that of God speaking in his word.

THUS, in the present case, there is no plain scripture-warrant offered for setting aside the scripture songs from the solemn praises of the church ; and for substituting human compositions in their place. We are told a great deal indeed about the superior advantages and suitability of these human compositions ; and about the disadvantages of continuing to sing the scripture-songs. But is this written ? Does the scripture say, that it is such a disadvantage to sing any part of the psalms ? Is their position to be found either in the express words of scripture or in the necessary consequences of the words ? Is it not rather a grievous error, which a great many other errors are employed to support ; such as, that we may not sing the psalms as the words of David and Asaph describing their own frames and exercises, and recorded for our instruction ; that the old-testament saints did not view Christ as God's way of mercy to them, and their way of access to God ; that the words we sing in the psalms are not the words of the Holy Spirit, &c. ? It cannot be shewn that the psalm mentioned in 1 Cor. xiv. 26. was not a scripture-psalm ; and even if it were shewn, yet the uttering of a psalm by a new testament prophet, can never warrant those who are no prophets to dictate psalms for the ordinary solemn worship of the church. The other passage in Coloss. iii. 16. is as little to their purpose, since it cannot be shewn from any thing in it, that the apostle meant psalms,

hymns and spiritual songs of human composition to be used in the solemn and formal worship of the church.

2. THE true light never shews us one truth or duty without shewing us its agreement and connexion with other truths and duties of God's word. The increase of true light, with respect to some of these, tends to establish us in the rest. False light, on the contrary, leads to sacrifice many truths to one favourite opinion. Thus, for the sake of this idol of the necessity of singing other than the scripture songs in solemn worship, the old testament church is given up to absolute ignorance of the meaning of their own types, and of Christ himself as the channel of the communication of spiritual blessings to their souls. For the sake of this idol, the words of scripture are denied to be the words of the Holy Ghost.

3. THE true light leads us to cleave to whatever conformity to the Lord's word his church has attained in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, according to his solemn charge, *Hold fast that which thou hast*. But false light leads to a contempt of these attainments. Thus, the light about singing hymns of human composition prevails much among the avowed enemies of reformation-principles; among Methodists, Baptists, Moravians, &c.

SURELY, the true light will increase our regard to the scriptural examples and attainments of those that have gone before us. Christ directs the spouse to *go her way forth by the footsteps of the flock*: it will lead us to ask for *the old paths*, as we are commanded to do in Jerem. vi. 16. But false light leads men to disregard and disparage the example of the church and people of God. Thus, in the present case, the advocates for the scheme of singing other than scripture-songs in the solemn worship of the church, make light of the contrariety of their scheme to the profession and practice of our reforming ancestors. But, certainly, there are several things that entitle their example in this matter to a very serious and attentive consideration. They are things which will be found to be very weighty, when the Lord arises to plead his cause with backsliding churches and professors.

1. OUR reforming ancestors in Britain and Ireland about the middle of the last century were favoured with a very signal outpouring of the influences of the Holy Spirit, giving them remarkably clear views, not only of particular articles of revealed truth, but of the system of it in general. We cannot fix upon any period, since the times of the apostles, in which the church, as such, attained to such an enlarged and accurate testimony, as the church of Christ in Britain then attained, against error and corruption in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government. Of this the confession of faith, the catechisms larger and shorter, the form of church government, and directory for public worship agreed on by the Westminster assembly, are lasting monuments. Nor is the oath of God, into which multitudes of all ranks cheerfully entered for abiding by the reformation they had attained, ever to be forgotten.

2. It was more especially the concern of our reforming ancestors in that period, to attain purity of worship, and to bear an ample testimony against all those human devices by which it had been corrupted.

3. PRESBYTERIANS in the last century appear to have been unanimous in their opposition to the singing of hymns of human composition, as then practised among various sects.

WE are far from looking upon our ancestors as infallible: yet we should not lightly charge them with actual error. And either they who took the singing of the book of psalms for suitable new-testament worship, or our opponents who reckon it ceremonial and antiquated, must be chargeable with error and delusion. With whom the delusion is, we may know by a diligent and impartial attention to the Lord's word and by prayer. For delusion may be known in the case of a people by such scriptural marks as the following. 1. Luke-warmness to the truths of God as his truths, bearing the stamp of his authority. 2. Thessa. ii. 10, 11. *They received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.* Reve. iii. 16. *Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot,*

*I will spue thee out of my mouth.* 2. A fondness for novelty, or something to tickle the ears and engage the fancy in matters of religion. 2 Timothy iv. 3, 4. *For the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts, shall heap up to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.* Deut. xxxii. 17. *They sacrificed to gods whom they knew not, to new gods, that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.* 3. Another symptom of delusion is men's high opinion of their own understanding and righteousness, disposing them to treat any plain or explicit testimony that is offered against their corruptions with contempt, representing those who are engaged in it as a sect unworthy of any regard or consideration, John vii. 46, 47, 48. *The officers answered, Never man spake like this man. Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.* John ix. 39, 40, 41. *And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into the world that they who see not might see; and that they who see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees who were with him, heard these words and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see: therefore, your sin remaineth.* Acts xxii. 21, 22. *And he said unto me, Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live.* Luke xix. 6, 7. *Zaccheus made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all marvelled saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.* Neh. iv. 1, 2. *But it came to pass that when Sabbath heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews. And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? Will they fortify themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they make an end in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish, which are burnt?* 4. Another symptom of delusion is indis-



ference and inattention to what is, in a peculiar manner, the duty of the present times. Matth. xvi. 3. *O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky ; but can ye not discern the signs of the times ?* Isai. xxii. 12, 13. *And in that day, did the Lord God of hosts call to weeping and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sack-cloth : and behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine : Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die. And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you, till ye die, saith the Lord God of hosts.* Luke xix. 41, 42. *And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace ! But now they are hid from thine eyes. They shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.* 5. Another symptom of delusion is when persons make their own thoughts, their own imaginations and reasonings, their rule in matters of religion, Prov. xiv. 12. *There is a way which seemeth right, to a man : but the end thereof is the ways of death.* Deut. xii. 8. *Ye shall not do after all the things, that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes.* Judges xxi. 25. *In those days there was no king in Israel : every man did that which was right in his own eyes.* Isai. lxv. 2. *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts.* Isai. viii. 20. *To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.* 6. Another symptom of delusion is an obstinate attachment to their idols, to their corrupt principles and practices, in opposition to all the means of reproof and conviction, disregarding the evidence which is offered, though sufficient for shewing the error of their way, pretending that they want some other evidence. Jerem. xlv. 15, 16, 17. *Then all the men who knew that their wives had burnt incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwell in the land of Egypt in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, As for the word that thou hast spoken to us in the name of the*

*Lord, we will not hearken unto thee: But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouth; to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. Hosea iv. 17. Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone. John xi. 47, 48, 53. Then gathered the chief priest and Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him, Then from that day forth they took council together to put him to death.. John x. 24. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. John ii. 18. Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us?*

7. Schemes of delusion evidence themselves to be such by their nature, tendency, and proper fruits. Matth. vii. 15, 16. *Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing; but inwardly are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Matth. xv. 6. Ye have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. Isai. xxix. 9, 10. They are drunken, but not with wine: they stagger, but not through strong drink. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep.*

8. Boasting of light, and other spiritual gifts is also a common symptom of delusion, Revel. iii. 17. *Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing. 1 Kings xxii. 24. Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near and smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee? Lastly, Delusion is attended with deep security, Jerem. vi. 14. They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. 1 Thessa. v. 3. When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.*

THESE instances of delusion are recorded for this very purpose, that we may know what we are to account delusion. It is highly necessary to try the various

schemes of religion, and the methods of propagating them in our day by such marks as these : that professors may be no more *children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive.* We should be much in prayer for the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, to teach us the right use and application of his own word. It is the concurrent testimony of all the saints, that the right application of the word, whether in a personal case or in that of the church, is to be attained in the way of fervent and believing prayer. But we have an infinitely greater testimony here, that of him who hath said, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth none ; and it shall be given him.*

SECT. III. Of the charge of aspersing the character of what is called the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church in North America.

A CHARGE has been brought against the writer of the Discourse on the Singing of Psalms, of attempting to asperse the reputation of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church in the United States of North America\*. Two passages of the discourse are adduced in support of this charge. The first of these passages is in answer to what had been urged in favour of the new psalmody, namely, That our Saviour had not left a system in the precise words of which we should either pray, or praise, or preach.

It was natural to observe here, what the objector could not contradict, that there must be some system, some form of psalmody : and as, according to the objector's hypothesis, there is no divine system or form of psalmody, it follows, that the church must have a human one : it was also natural to observe the easy transition from the recommendation of a human system to the appointment of it. Nor was it less natural, especially since the objector had represented prayer, as, in this re-

\* An examination, &c. page 45.

spect, upon the same footing with praise, (indeed, he allows no difference between them at all, but in respect of the music) to observe the progress from humanly devised forms of praise to humanly devised forms of prayer. All this was saying nothing about any man or body of men; but merely what is incident to human nature in its present state of universal proneness to evil. In reading the debates of the British house of commons, we find it usual with the members, in arguing for the repeal of particular acts of parliament, to represent these acts as tending to the destruction of the national virtue or civil liberty. This is not accounted calumny; but a rational freedom of debate.

As to the other passage, the matter of it was suggested by the view which the writer had been led to take of the state of religion in Europe. A little before he wrote that paragraph, he had been reading Dr, Lowth, Bishop of Oxford, on Isaiah, and accounts of new publications in some numbers of the monthly review, which had been put into his hand. He could not but observe how the pretended critics of the present age employed themselves in cavilling at the text of the Hebrew and Greek originals of the holy scripture, which had been so ably defended by the Buxtorfs the Glassiuses, the Leusdens of the last age. He was led to mention this evil, from its analogy to that of denying that we have the inspired forms of the psalms in our translations of them.

THE general assembly is not mentioned in the paragraph of the discourse now referred to; nor is there any thing in it by which it can justly be appropriated to that body; since the evils complained of are common to multitudes of other denominations in Europe and America.

As to the objector's defiance of any one to shew that the members of the general assembly are heretical in their judgment, with respect to the authenticity of passages which Socinians represent as irreparably corrupted, he may, perhaps, be safe enough; as this is a controversy, which, from the state of theological learning in this country, few of these members are, probably, much acquainted with. The efforts that have been made by the



inhabitants of the united states in erecting and endowing schools and colleges for the cultivation of classical and other learning, are highly commendable, and tend eminently to preserve the liberty and promote the welfare of the states. But the means, which have been in common use in every country, where theological learning has flourished, are still, in a great measure, *desiderata* in the united states. The want of an opportunity of attending the lectures of a public teacher or professor of divinity, is a very great disadvantage to those who study with a view to the holy ministry. There also appears a want of disposition to remedy this defect: A gentleman, eminent in the republic of letters, who had quitted his native country with a view to be instrumental in promoting the interests of literature and of religion in this, entered upon a course of theological lectures in the academy in which he presides, and proposed to continue them. But there is ground to say, the proposal was not encouraged.

WHAT can be expected but that ignorance will prevail of the first, the sublimest, and incomparably the most useful and necessary of all sciences, while people evidence their contempt of it by neglecting to erect schools for the accurate study of it? We should have schools and teachers of theology in them, as the church had under the old testament. See 1 Sam. xix. 20. 2 Kings ii. 3, 4. Acts xix. 9.

WITH respect to the Latitudinarian scheme of church-communion, it is doing no injustice to that assembly to say, they bear no proper testimony against it. The writer of the Discourse on Singing Psalms is persuaded that the word of God requires the church to exclude, from her communion in sealing ordinances, not only the grossly immoral before the world, but all such as refuse to make a consistent profession of our holy religion; all known or professed enemies of any article of our confession of faith, as Methodists and Baptists; all that deny Presbyterian-church government to be the only form of it which the Lord hath appointed in his word, as the Episcopalians and Independents. In a word, he cannot understand how a church can hold communion with any avowed enemy of Christ's truths, or of any of his com-

mands, of which that church has attained the knowledge and profession ; without being chargeable with trampling upon his royal authority interposed in such words as these : *Hold fast that which thou hast. Whereto ye have already attained, walk by the same rule, mind the same thing. Mark them who cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have heard and avoid them. Withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly. Now I beseech you, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing ; and that there be no divisions among you ; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. It was needful for me to write unto you and to exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*

LATITUDINARIAN objections are often offered ; but have been frequently answered. Because the apostles represent various errors and disorders prevailing in the churches to which they wrote : it will not follow, that it was the duty of these churches to receive such as were obstinate in such errors and disorders into their communion. Because the godly, under the old testament, in times of prevailing corruption, had to attend the worship of the temple, which was then the centre of the public ordinances of the whole visible church of God upon earth ; it will by no means follow, that we ought to keep communion with an obstinately corrupt particular church, which cannot pretend that there is any duty which cannot be performed, or any ordinance which cannot be enjoyed out of her communion. But what is most insisted on is, the pretended necessity of this Latitudinarian scheme of church-communion, for preserving peace and union : But it ought to be well considered, whether it be genuine and scriptural peace, which a particular church attains by receiving such as bring another doctrine, another form of worship or government, than that which Christ hath delivered to us in his word ; or that obstinately refuse to walk in some of his ordinances or commandments.

WITH respect to purity of doctrine in the general assembly, if we may judge of it from some late publications of its members, we have reason to apprehend there

is a most grievous departure from it. The writer whose objections have been so particularly considered, in support of an unscriptural mode of worship, teaches, "that the medium through which the mercy and grace of God is communicated to sinners was not discovered in the old testament; that the types were not for the benefit of those that lived under the old testament dispensation; that the old testament is not a rule of faith and practice to us as well as the new testament; that the words of scripture, when translated, are not the words of the Holy Spirit." About four or five years ago, we had a publication consisting of three sermons, Mr. Whitefield's letter on Predestination, and an address to the Deists, by Mr. Patillo, a minister belonging to the general assembly of the Presbyterian church in the united states, whose manuscript, as he informs us, had been carefully perused and corrected by another minister of that body. In that publication we are taught, "that there are probably teachers in heaven; that when an infant soul or pious pagan first arrives there, some one, learned in the great salvation, may be employed to teach them the saviour." This is directly contrary to what we have been taught according to the word of God: "They who having never heard the gospel, know not Jesus Christ, and believe not in him, cannot be saved." Large Cat. quest. 60. And again, "Unto the catholic visible church, Christ hath given the ministry, oracles and ordinances of God for the gathering and *perfecting of the saints in this life.*" Confess. chap. xxv. And again, "The communion in glory with Christ which the members of the invisible church enjoy immediately after death, is, in that their souls are then made perfect in holiness, and received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory." Again, we are taught by Mr. Patillo, "that the human soul of Christ existed from the beginning of the world; that it is the wisdom who speaks in the eighth chapter of the Proverbs; that the first person of the godhead, previous to the covenant of redemption, brought into existence the soul of Christ, by an act of his almighty power, which he calls

“ begetting ; that then God was a father, and never till  
 “ then : That it is doubtful whether it be good divinity  
 “ to call Christ, the eternal Son of God, if any more be  
 “ meant than the existence of his soul, prior to all crea-  
 “ tures ; that the proceeding of the Holy Spirit from  
 “ the Father and the Son is not from eternity.” This  
 is contrary to what we have been taught agreeably to  
 the holy scriptures : “ In the unity of the godhead there  
 “ be three persons of one substance, power, and eternity ;  
 “ God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy  
 “ Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor  
 “ proceeding ; the Son is eternally begotten of the Fa-  
 “ ther ; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the  
 “ Father and the Son.” Confession chap. ii. Again,  
 “ It pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to choose and  
 “ ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, to be me-  
 “ diator between God and man ;—unto whom he did  
 “ from all eternity give a people to be his seed.—Who  
 “ did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon him  
 “ man’s nature, with all the essential properties thereof.”  
 Confess. chap. viii. Again, we are taught by this writer,  
 “ that it was possible for our Saviour, while on earth, to  
 “ have been guilty of sin ; or that the will of his human  
 “ nature might have chosen evil.” This is also contra-  
 ry to sound doctrine : “ It was requisite that the Me-  
 “ diator, who was to reconcile God and man, should him-  
 “ self be both God and man, and this in one person, that  
 “ the proper works of each nature might be accepted of  
 “ God for us, and rested on by us as the works of the  
 “ whole person.” Larger Cat. Quest. 40. Thus it is  
 evident that the proper works of the human nature may  
 be ascribed to the whole person : so that if the human  
 nature could sin, then sin might be the work of the  
 whole person, which is the height of blasphemy. How  
 insignificant is the adherence of the general assembly be-  
 fore mentioned to the Westminster confession and cate-  
 chisms ; and how far is it from being any security, or  
 evidence of soundness of the faith, among them, while  
 their members are propagating, by the press, such per-  
 nicious and blasphemous errors, without censure ?



SECT. IV. Of the Appendix to the Discourse on the Divine Ordinance of Singing Psalms.

IT has been said, that some historical account of psalmody which is given in the first number of the appendix to the Discourse on Singing Psalms, is partial. And what is the reason? Why, "the writer does not pretend to give a compleat history of psalmody\*." One should think, that common sense or common candour would allow any writer to select such a part of a subject as he seems to have some materials for managing. Enough, however, is said in that number, to prove that, though it could be shewn that the singing of human compositions had obtained so early as the beginning of the second century, it would be insufficient to vindicate the practice from the charge of superstition; that some passages of ancient history had been made use of, particularly, Pliny's letter to Trajan, as relating to the custom of singing such compositions in the ordinary public worship of the church, with little or no colour of reason; and that the scripture-psalms were sung in the public worship of the church before the fourth century.

"REMARKABLE," says Witliius, in his ix. dissertation upon the creed, "is the account which Jerom gives of the christians in his time in a letter to Marcella, inviting her to the country about Bethlehem. Here, says he, you cannot walk out into the fields, but you will hear one, while he holds the plough, singing hallelujahs; another, while he reaps, entertaining himself with psalms; another, while he prunes the vines, singing some of the words of David. We have no other songs or ballads in this province. What Strada, the Jesuit, represents as matter of reproach, is greatly to the honour of our ancestors. The version of the psalms, says he, by Marot and Beza, having been rejected and condemned by the catholics, continued to be in the greatest esteem among the heretics; who from that time might be known by their custom of singing the psalms in French to the Geneva tunes, not only

\* An examination, &c. page 71.

“ in their worshipping assemblies, but even when they  
 “ were journeying or following their business in the  
 “ shops.”

THE second number consists of eight sections. The first remarks on the impropriety of calling Dr. Watt's imitation a translation or version. The design of the second section is to shew, from the example of the first psalm, how much the manner of expression in Dr. Watts's imitation departs from the phraseology and sense of the original; and that even where he has not the pretence for such deviation, of references to the usages of the ceremonial law. Little reasoning was necessary here: the difference between them is obvious.

WHAT is called a tree in the 3d verse, is, in the doctor's imitation, a plant. It has been observed in defence of the imitation, that, in various places of scripture, the idea of a plant is annexed to that of a tree\*. This is not denied; but because one idea is connected with another, we are not, therefore, to confound them. No ideas are more easily distinguished than these two: the state of a vegetable production, when it is come to maturity and bearing fruit, which is plainly what the psalmist here meant, and the state of it, when it was only a plant. The word tree, indeed, may sometimes denote the kind as distinguished from herbs, as in Gen. i. 29. Levit. xix. 23. But here it denotes not only *the kind* of the production, but *the state* of it. The verse is not ill rendered by an old Scots poet.

That man shall be like to a tree,  
 That, planted by the running river, grows;  
 Which fruit doth bear in time of year;  
 Whose leaves shall never fade nor root *unlawse*.

THE third section consists of examples of erroneous or dangerous expressions. These expressions struck the writer, when he perused the book, in the light wherein he has represented them: and he greatly mistakes, if even a favourer of the imitation, with a tolerable por-

\* An examination, &c. page 112.

tion of candour, would not wish that the author had expressed himself in a more guarded manner.

THE next four sections, namely, the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th, are of great importance with respect to the matter in dispute, concerning the use of this imitation in solemn worship. For it cannot be vindicated, unless the particular mode of speaking and arrangement of matter, which Dr. Watts hath chosen, be shewn to be preferable or more suitable to new testament worship, than the particular mode of speaking and arrangement of matter which the Holy Spirit had made choice of; and unless, with respect to the metaphors and verses omitted, it be shewn that the omission is preferable to the retaining of them; each of them being unfit to have a place in the psalmody of the new testament church. After all, it will be necessary to shew, that the preference of the alterations made by Dr. Watts in the form of discourse, in method, in metaphors, is consistent with a due esteem of the holy scriptures; that is, with an esteem of them as the word of God, with which we cannot suppose any writings of men to be equal or even comparable,—without profanity and blasphemy.

WITH respect to the eighth and last section, it is of no importance to the matter in debate. Though each of the passages adduced were shewn to be unexceptionable in a literary point of view, the merits of the cause would not be affected: because the matter in question is, whether it be warrantable to use any songs of human composition at all, in the solemn worship of the church?

IT seems strange that any reasonable person should represent the writer of these remarks as opposing his authority to that of Dr. Watts. It never occurred to him, that offering his opinion, concerning some of the Doctor's expressions, would have the remotest tendency to suggest such an idea. He neither expected nor desired his opinion to be any otherwise regarded than according to the reasonableness of it.

IT has been represented as sufficient for the confutation of the whole of these remarks, to point out the error of two or three of them. In this representation

there is about as much justice as there would be in representing a proof of a position by an induction of fifty particulars as insufficient, because three of these particulars had been found to be so. It is as equitable a sentence as that of a judge would be, who, in a case in which the evidence arose from the deposition of fifty witnesses, should determine to proceed upon the deposition of three of them, that were apparently the most exceptionable of the whole number.

LET us, however, take a view of the defence which has been offered of two passages, which appeared faulty in the imitation.

WITH respect to the following line—

While I pursue my God ;

it has been said, that, in scripture, we are exhorted to pursue love and peace ; and that the word is applicable to every object which we desire to obtain\*. The writer of the appendix will not be positive. He may however offer some farther explanation of his opinion ; though, in doing so, it seems, he runs the risque of being charged with a supercilious and arrogant manner, with counting all the learned world pigmies, with ignorance, and so forth. With regard to the remark that was made on this word, the application of it to persons only was meant. There are various applications of it to things which are very proper, as to pursue peace, to pursue a method, to pursue a thought. But the application of it to persons is of distinct consideration. And here perhaps, it will not be found that any good author uses it, to express the exalted esteem, the ardent affection, or the profound veneration that is paid to a person of superior excellence and dignity. *Prosequi aliquem amore et reverentia*, is allowed to be according to the Latin idiom : but *to pursue with love and reverence*, is not what corresponds thereto, according to the idiom of our language. It would be proper to bid a servant pursue a thief ; but hardly so, to bid him pursue his master ;

\* An examination, &c. page 112.



when it was meant, that he should endeavour to overtake him. In psalm lxiii. 8. *Dabbah naphshi* signifies *my soul cleaves or adheres to*; but on account of the preposition *achareicha after thee*, our translators have rendered it *follows hard*.

AGAIN, it had been observed; that the ellipsis in the following two lines is not agreeable to the genius of our language.

Thou mak'st the sleeping billows roll,  
The rolling billows sleep.

IN an ellipsis which is proper, the words to be supplied are necessary to render the sentence agreeable to the rules of syntax, as in this, *Modesty is peculiarly becoming in youth, prudence in old age*. It is plain that there must be an ellipsis in the last part of this sentence, because every nominative must have a verb agreeing with it, either expressed or understood. To say that an ellipsis is necessary, because the sense requires it, is only saying that we have found the expression to be nonsense; and therefore something must be arbitrarily supplied to make it sense:—a method which manifestly tends to render language quite vague and indeterminate.

It is alleged that the ellipsis in Luke vii. 22. is parallel to this\*. It is allowed, that if the connecting particles *how that* had been left out, there would have been some resemblance. But as it is, the structure of the sentence in the Evangelist is not liable to the remark, which was made on that imitation. But the following is a sentence similar to that of the imitation:

Canst thou, O Night, indulge one labour more?  
One labour more indulge?

Night Thoughts.

HERE, according to the idiom of our language, we understand the poet as first inquiring whether the night could indulge another labour; and then praying that the

\* An examination, &c. page 113.

would indulge it. But, according to the ellipsis of the imitator, the last member of this sentence would be merely a repetition of the first.

THE same observation may be made with respect to the following passage of a *Hymn on the Creation*:

He bids the clouds ascend on high;  
The clouds ascend.

WE conclude with some addition to the list, formerly given, of passages exceptionable in point of composition; the admirers of the imitation must excuse other people, if they cannot see the propriety or elegance of the following examples.

- |                        |       |   |
|------------------------|-------|---|
| Psal. ix. second part, | v. 8. | And <i>put</i> their heart to<br><i>pain</i> .  |
| xviii. second part,    | 5.    | The good and faithful<br>souls shall find<br>A God <i>as</i> faithful and <i>as</i><br>kind.      |
| xxv. second part,      | 4.    | Their seed shall <i>taste</i> the<br>promises<br>In their <i>extensive</i> grace.                 |
| Third part,            | 4.    | My heart<br>Is desolate and <i>low</i> .  |
| xxxvii. second part,   | 4.    | His lips abhor to talk <i>pro-<br/>fane</i> .   |
| Third part,            | 3.    | Makes them heirs<br>Of blessings <i>long to come</i> .  |
| xxxix. first part,     | 3.    | The pious <i>thoughts I feel</i> .  |
| xliv.                  | 6.    | Though dragons all around<br>us <i>roar</i> ,<br><i>With their</i> destructive<br><i>breath</i> . |
| xlix. first part,      | 2.    | And boast <i>as though</i> his flesh<br>were <i>born</i><br><i>Of better dust</i> than they.      |

- Pfal. lxviii. third part, 1. And *loads* our *days* with  
rich supplies.
- lxi. 2. Oh lead me to the rock  
That's high *above my head*.
- lxix. first part, v. 3. More than the hairs *around*  
my head.
- lxxiii. first part, 10. Yet I was kept from *full*  
despair.
- lxxv. 5. Nor can the wind such *bles-*  
*sings blow*.
- lxxxiii. 6. *Convince* their *madness*.
- lxxxix. first part, 3. Thy throne  
Shall stand eternal *like my*  
own.
- Fifth part, 1. And tempt mine anger  
*down*.
- xc. short metre, 1. — What a feeble *piece*.
- xc. first part, 6. — The poison'd air  
Grows pure, *if Israel's God*  
be there.
- xcii. first part, 5. I shall *share* a glorious *part*.
- xcv. 6. The Lord in vengeance  
*dress'd*.
- cvii. second part, 4. — That dismal shade  
That hung so *heavy* round  
their *head*.
- cx. second part, 1. Eternal shall *thy* priesthood  
be,  
And change from hand to  
hand *no more*.
- cxxvi. 4. Will shout to see the harvest  
yield  
A welcome load of *joyful*  
sheaves.

Psal. cxxxvii.

8. Here let him *bold* a lasting  
*throne.*cxlviii. prop. met. 4. He mov'd their mighty  
wheelsIn *unknown ages past.*Long met. 12. Speak of the wonders of that  
loveWhich Gabriel *plays* on eve-  
ry chord.*Extracts from Bishop HORNE's Preface to the Com-  
mentary on the Book of Psalms. (Philad. Edition.)*

“ WITH regard to the Jews, Bishop Chandler very  
 “ pertinently remarks,—that was the Mes-  
 “ sias not concerned in the psalms, it were absurd to  
 “ celebrate twice a day, in their public devotions, the  
 “ the events of one man's life, who was deceased so long  
 “ ago, as to have no relation now to the Jews and the  
 “ circumstances of their affairs; or to transcribe whole  
 “ passages from them into their prayers for the coming  
 “ of the Messiah.” Page xiii.

“ The psalms have advantages, which no fresh com-  
 “ positions, however finely executed, can possibly have;  
 “ since, besides their incomparable fitness to express our  
 “ sentiments, they are, at the same time, memorials of,  
 “ and appeals to former mercies and deliverances; they  
 “ are acknowledgments of prophecies accomplished;  
 “ they point out the connection between the old and  
 “ new dispensations, thereby teaching us to admire and  
 “ adore the wisdom of God displayed in both, and fur-  
 “ nishing, while we read or sing them, an inexhaustible  
 “ variety of the noblest matter that can engage the con-  
 “ templations of man.” Page xiv, xv.

“ The offence taken at the supposed uncharitable and  
 “ vindictive spirit of the imprecations which occur in



“ some of the psalms, ceases immediately, if we change  
 “ the imperative for the future, and read, not *let them be*  
 “ confounded, &c. but *they shall be* confounded, &c.  
 “ Of which the Hebrew is equally capable. Such pass-  
 “ ages will then have no more difficulty in them, than  
 “ the other frequent predictions of divine vengeance in  
 “ the writings of the prophets, or denunciations of it  
 “ in the gospels; intended to warn, to alarm, and to lead  
 “ sinners to repentance, that they may fly from the wrath  
 “ to come.——If the imprecatory form be still con-  
 “ tended for, all that can be meant by it, whether ut-  
 “ tered by the prophet, by Messiah, or by ourselves, must  
 “ be a solemn ratification of the just judgments of the  
 “ Almighty against his impenitent enemies, like what  
 “ we find ascribed to the blessed spirits in heaven, when  
 “ such judgments were executed. Rev. xi. 17, 18. xvi.  
 “ 5, 6, 7. See Merrick’s Annotations on Psal. cix. and  
 “ Witlii Miscellan. Sacr. Lib. I. Cap. xviii. Sect. 24.”  
 Page xxv. xxvi.

“ The psalms of David convey those comforts to  
 “ others, which they afforded to himself. Composed  
 “ upon particular occasions, yet designed for general use;  
 “ delivered out as services for Israelites under the law,  
 “ yet no less adapted to the circumstances of the Chris-  
 “ tians under the gospel: they present religion to us in  
 “ the most engaging dress; communicating truths which  
 “ philosophy could never investigate, in a style which  
 “ poetry can never equal.—Calculated alike to profit  
 “ and to please, they inform the understanding, elevate  
 “ the affections and entertain the imagination. Indited  
 “ under the influence of him to whom all hearts are  
 “ known, and all events foreknown, they suit mankind  
 “ in all situations, grateful as the manna which descend-  
 “ ed from above, and conformed itself to every palate.  
 “ The fairest productions of human wit, after a few  
 “ perusals, like gathered flowers, wither in our hands, and  
 “ lose their fragrance; but these unfading plants of pa-  
 “ radise become, as we are accustomed to them, still  
 “ more and more beautiful; their bloom appears to be  
 “ daily heightened; fresh odours are emitted, and new  
 “ sweets extracted from them. He who hath once tasted

“ their excellencies will desire to taste them again; and  
 “ he who tastes them ofteneft, will relish them best.”  
 Page xxx, xxxi.

# F I N I S.

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*The reader is desired to correct the following escapes.*

Page 75	line 37	For <i>persevere</i> read <i>preserve</i> .
78	— 28	For <i>saying</i> read <i>singing</i> .
87	— 19	Expunge <i>as</i> .
92	— 29	For <i>in</i> read <i>is</i> .
104	— 6	Expunge <i>most ceremonial and</i> .
111	— 9	Of the note, For <i>like</i> read <i>alike</i> .
112	— 28	For <i>exercise</i> read <i>exercised</i> .
113	— 6	Read <i>began under</i> .
117	— 40	For <i>proposition</i> read <i>supposition</i> .
122	— 24	For <i>understood</i> read <i>understand</i> .
132	— 18	For <i>not all</i> read <i>not at all</i> .
137	— 26	For <i>but is</i> read <i>but it is</i> .
153	— 18	For <i>and</i> read <i>an</i> .
171	— last	For <i>any avowed enemy of</i> read <i>an avowed enemy of any of</i> .
179	— 28	Before <i>imitation</i> read <i>of the</i> .









